ANCASTER, ON L9K 1J4

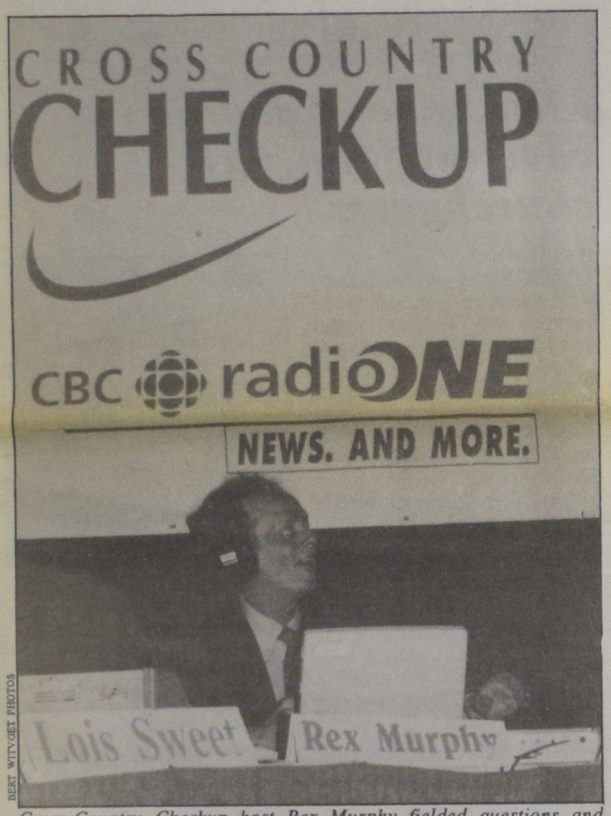
CHRISTIAN COURIER
A Reformed Weekly

REDEEMER COLLEGE LIBRARY
CHRISTIAN COURIER
PER/BX/9401/.C36
JUL 0 2 1998

53rd Ye... June 26, 1998 No. 2580 $1.07

# Faith and media go toe to toe

## *Unique conference probes media coverage of religion*




BERT WITVOET PHOTOS

*Cross-Country Checkup host Rex Murphy fielded questions and comments from people such as Gerald Vandezande (upper right) about how well the media cover faith issues.*

**Bert Witvoet**

OTTAWA — One main question that dominated the Faith and the Media conference held at the Carleton University School of Journalism was: How well do the media in Canada cover religion?

It was the topic of Cross Country Checkup, a CBC phone-in program hosted by Rex Murphy and conducted on campus. It was discussed at a round-table of three editors and five religion reps and shepherded by Hana Gartner of CBC TV's "The National" magazine. It was tossed around at plenary forums and at workshops that featured more editors, clergy, reporters and producers than one can shake a pen at.

The consensus seemed to be that either the media has a hard time reporting on religion or else it has a strong bias against it. Or, just maybe, people of faith don't communicate their story well.

### The great divide

One major cause of poor media coverage of religion emerged as a number of senior journalists declared themselves to be rationalists who think they are separated from people of faith by a wide gap.

Peter Desbarats, former dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of Western Ontario, squarely placed himself on the side of "logic" and "science," declaring that most religious people take a fundamentalist and anti-rational approach to life. The more science uncovers about the nature of reality, the harder it is to believe, he said.

### Hard to cover

William Thorsell, editor of the *Globe and Mail* went him one better by declaring religion to be an extension of sociology, all of which he as "a rationalist" finds hard to cover.

According to Desbarats, the schism between rationalism, which a liberal elite or upper class holds on to, and fundamentalism, espoused by conservative lower classes, is the story of our time, a story which journalists are missing.

He pointed out that the dispute last November between London mayor Diane Haskett and the local gay community

*See* **SEPARATION** *page 2...*

# *Canola oil sale helps MCC alleviate poverty in China*

WINNIPEG, Man. — A poverty alleviation project Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is implementing in China took a leap forward in early June with the sale of 5,000 tonnes of Canadian vegetable oil to a company in China.

"We're breathing a bit easier now," said Tony Enns of MCC who helped coordinate the effort which called for simultaneous bids for the purchase of the Canola oil in Canada, and the sale of the oil in China. Bids for both the sale in Canada and purchase in China took place at 3 p.m. on Friday, May 29.

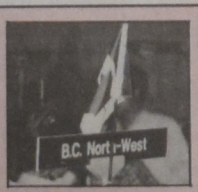
Here's how it worked:

* The federal government's Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) supported Canadian farmers and vegetable oil processors by providing $5.2 million to purchase the Canola oil.

* MCC contracted with Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) in

*See* **MCC** *page 3...*

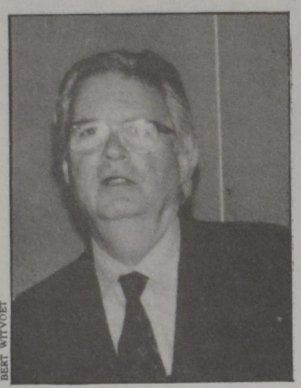
**Van Til reports on a leisurely CRC Synod '98**
See page 6




**VanderVennen inspects Peetoom's three cans of worms**
**Hielema lives in a crazy world**
See pages 14, 15

**Ottawa conference featured press vs. priest**
See page 10

# Separation of faith and logic a false dilemma



BERT WITVOET

*Peter Desbarats*

*... continued from page 1*

was "a religious event with political implications." The media did not acknowledge that, nor did it see this event as part of a larger groundswell of conservatism that challenges the liberal elite.

### False dilemma

Various representatives of the religious media spoke out against the inability or unwillingness of journalists like Peter Desbarats and William Thorsell to acknowledge rationalism as a religion. They shook their heads in disbelief as they saw themselves being designated to a corner where intelligence seems to play such a small role.

John Stackhouse, professor of religion at the University of Manitoba, remarked that "we weren't just making it up when we accused the media of having a liberal bias."

Brian Stiller, president of Tyndale College, protested that the separation of faith and logic was a false dilemma. And Muslim leader Dr. James Badawi of Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, challenged Thorsell's idea that rationalism is not a religion.

### Better understanding

What the conference accomplished, besides showing the liberal bias of some media representatives, was narrow the gap between faith groups and the media. Workshops like "Barriers to Faith Coverage" dealt with the idea "What faith groups wish the media knew about covering faith" as well as "What reporters wish faith groups knew about how the media works."

And Muslim speakers certainly got their point across well that the western media has a habit of treating all Muslims as terrorists and oppressors of women.

According to a pamphlet by Zulf Khalfan, "Islam has been characterized as being radical, destabilizing, anti-feminist, anti-progressive and anti-democratic." *Maclean*'s editor, Robert Lewis, admitted that his magazine's headline of a recent story about Pakistan's nuclear bomb should not have read "The 'Islamic bomb'" since India's bomb has never been referred to as the *Hindu bomb*. and America's bomb has never been referred to as the "Christian bomb."

*John Stackhouse*

"The best thing about the conference was meeting all these people from other publications," said Bill Fledderus, news/features writer for *Faith Today*. As a journalist I do a lot of research, and so it's good to see who those editors I have to talk to are."

Another worthwhile thing about the conference was that it forced a broad segment of media people to do some self-examination on how well they are covering religion, he added. "Seeing us all there made editors of major newspapers and television people realize that this is a serious question for many people."

# *Media does a poor job of covering faith, say churchgoers*

**Bert Witvoet**

TORONTO — A Canada-wide telephone poll, conducted between May 12 and 17 this year, showed that 65 per cent of regular churchgoers are dissatisfied with how the media covers faith or religion, reports Angus Reid. The poll was prompted by the Faith and the Media conference at Carleton university.

ALAN DOERKSEN

*Andrew Grenville, of the Angus Reid Group.*

Just 12 per cent of weekly churchgoers feel churches and religious organizations get very or extremely favorable coverage, while 41 per cent say stories about large corporations are covered in a very or extremely favorable manner.

Six in 10 (60 per cent) of Canadians say religion is an important part of their life, and 22 per cent attend religious services once a week or more.

One third of all Canadians (36 per cent) feel that faith coverage is inadequate. A similar percentage say that women's issues don't get sufficient space. One quarter of Canadians say that gay and lesbian rights issues get too little coverage.

The poll was conducted among a representative cross-section of 1,116 adult Canadians, and is said to have a 95 per cent certainty that the results are within 2.5 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled.

Weekly churchgoers are more likely to be Atlantic Canadians (35 per cent) and least likely to be British Columbians (17 per cent) and Quebecers (15 per cent).


# FROM COAST TO COAST

## Back to God Hour: English Radio:

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Duncan - CKAY | 10:00am | 1500 |
| Burns Lake-CFLD | 9:15am | 1400 |
| Osoyoos-CJOR | 8:00am | 1490 |
| Penticton-CKOR | 8:00am | 800 |
| Port Alberni-CJAV | 7:00pm | 1240 |
| Prince George-CIRX | 7:00am | 94.3 |
| Princeton-CHOR | 8:00am | 1400 |
| Smithers-CFBV | 9:15am | 1230 |
| Summerland-CHOR | 8:00am | 1450 |
| Vernon-CJIB | 9:30pm | 940 |

**QUEBEC**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Montreal - CIQC | 7:30am | 600 |

**ALBERTA**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Brooks-CIBQ | 8:00am | 1340 |
| Ft. McMurray-CJOK | 8:30am | 1230 |
| High River-CHRB | 6:30pm | 1280 |
| Edmonton - CKER | 11:00pm | 101.9 |
| Westlock-CFOK | 7:30am | 1370 |

**SASKATCHEWAN**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Estevan-CJSL | 8:00am | 1280 |
| Weyburn-CFSL | 8:00am | 1190 |

**MANITOBA**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Altona-CFAM | 9:30am | 950 |
| Steinbach-CHSM | 9:30am | 1250 |
| Winnipeg-CKJS | 9:15am | 810 |

**ONTARIO**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Atikokan-CFAK | 9:30am | 1240 |
| Chatham-CFCO | 6:30am | 630 |
| Fort Frances-CFOB | 9:30am | 640 |
| Guelph - CJOY | 8:30am | 1460 |
| Hamilton-CHAM | 7:30am | 820 |
| Kapuskasing-CKAP | 7:00am | 580 |
| Kingston-WLKC | 7:30am | 100.7 |
| Newmarket- CKDX | 9:30am | 88.5 |
| Oshawa-CKDO | 8:00am | 1350 |
| Owen Sound-CFOS | 10:30am | 560 |
| Pembroke-CHVR | 10:00am | 96.7 |
| Sarnia-CHOK | 7:30am | 1070 |
| Stratford-CJCS | 8:45am | 1240 |
| Windsor-CKLW | 8:30am | 580 |
| Wingham-CKNX | 10:30am | 920 |

**NEW BRUNSWICK**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Saint John-CHSJ | 9:30am | 700 |

**PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Charlottetown-CFCY | 7:00am | 630 |

**NOVA SCOTIA**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Digby-CKDY | 6:00am | 1420 |
| Kentville-CKEN | 8:30am | 1490 |
| Middleton-CKAD | 8:30am | 1350 |
| New Glasgow-CKEC | 7:30am | 1320 |
| Weymouth-CKDY | 8:30am | 103.1 |
| Windsor-CFAB | 8:30am | 1450 |
| Sydney-CJCB | 8:00 am | 1270 |

**TELEVISION:**
***Faith 20-TV***

Check your local listings for cable outlets airing *Faith 20*.

Alberta - Lethbridge - CJIL
.....Thursday - 9:00pm
.....Saturday - 12:00noon

***Vision -TV***
(every Saturday)

| | |
|---|---|
| British Columbia | 7:00&10:00pm |
| Alberta | 8:00 & 11:00pm |
| Sask. & Manitoba | 6:00 & 9:00pm |
| Ontario & Quebec | 7:00 & 10:00pm |
| Nfld., N.B., N.S. & P.E.I. | 8:00 & 11:00pm |

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

P.O.Box 5070, Station LCD 1
Burlington,ON L7R 3Y8
(905) 336-2920



nelson insurance brokers limited

PERSONAL, COMMERCIAL & BUSINESS INSURANCE SERVICES

Your Insurance Broker Understands

Ralph Toering • John Van Wijngaarden • Martha Bunker

305 Plains Road East, Burlington, ON L7T 2C7
Tel. (905) 631-9090 * Fax (905) 631-9099 * Toll Free 1-888-345-9090

# MCC, Chinese government co-operate to fight poverty

WORLD BOOK PHOTO BY ROBERT BORJA

*A Chinese man enjoys a simple meal.*

*... continued from page 1*

Winnipeg to arrange for the purchase and sale of the oil.

* The Chinese government agreed to forego duty and taxes on the vegetable oil as part of its contribution to the poverty alleviation project.

* Proceeds from the sale — estimated at $5.75 million — will be used to help fund the five year project.

"All kinds of things could have gone wrong at this stage," said Enns. "We could have had no offers at this end (in Canada) or no offers at the other end (in China). The bids in China could have come in for less than we paid for the oil in Canada."

Why didn't CIDA simply grant MCC the $5.2 million? It's because CIDA has a number of financial "pockets," Enns explained. Money from the funding pocket that MCC accessed must be used to purchase Canadian goods or services for overseas development.

"An alternative for us would have been to use the Canola oil as the food component in a food-for-work project in China, but we felt it would have been too complex and inflexible."

"Now we have the money to begin working at sustainable, long term poverty reduction."

The funds will be managed by a joint project steering committee comprising representatives from CIDA, MCC, AMITY (a Chinese non-governmental organization initially organized by the Chinese Protestant Churches) and the Chinese government.

MCC has committed nearly $1 million to the project and CIDA has committed a further $500,000 for project development, technical assistance, monitoring, evaluation and more. The Chinese government will provide staff and local expertise at the national and provincial levels.

The funds will be applied to specific poverty alleviation projects in four provinces in China — Ningxia, Gansu, Shanxi, and Guishui. These projects vary from micro credit schemes which enable people to expand home businesses, to initiatives that will help improve health and literacy.

"The Chinese government has launched a massive campaign to eradicate poverty by the year 2000," said Enns. There are currently between 250-280 million people in China living below the poverty line which is defined as the equivalent of having a net income of $100 annually per capita.

"Part of our (MCC) focus is on participatory development. We want the beneficiaries of the project deciding how the money should be spent."

The project will end in 2003.

# *Redeemer may soon confer bachelor's!*

**Bert Witvoet**

ANCASTER, Ont, — Redeemer College is almost there as far as being able to grant regular Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees is concerned. An all-party agreement at the legislative committee level at Queen's Park pretty well assures that the bill granting this power will pass, says Redeemer Director of Communications and Media Mark Van Beveren.

The second and third reading of this bill along with several other private bills, is expected to take place June 25, with royal assent given possibly the next day.

A three-person review committee made a positive recommendation to the legislative committee on June 17, a meeting which Redeemer President Justin Cooper and Vice-President (academic) Elaine Botha attended. Since no one challenged the recommendation, a positive report was given to David Johnson, minister of education and training.

## Public perception

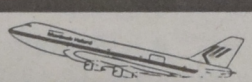
The power to grant regular degrees is important to the college, even though the degrees that have been granted up till now have posed no problems for current and past students at Redeemer in life after graduation, says Van Beveren. The college is more concerned with the perception in the broader community that such degrees would not carry sufficient weight in academic institutions and the job market.

Van Beveren hopes that the new situation will increase enrolment for the college, if not this year (most students have made their plans for the 1998-99 school year), at least in the following years.

Van Beveren pointed out that public funding is not an issue for Redeemer and that Redeemer's lack of interest in public funding was part of its presentation to the minister of education and the legislature. For the sake of the independence of our faculty, it's better to operate without funding, says Van Beveren. Historically, Ontario universities have paid the price for public funding as they lost their independence and religious freedom, especially in the hiring of faculty.


**AMSTERDAM '98**

Non Stop Charter flights
via **Martinair Holland**



**Departs/Return every Monday & Thursday**
BOOK NOW!! WE ARE YOUR OFFICIAL MARTINAIR AGENT
** WE WILL NOT BE UNDERSOLD **

**Verstraete Travel & Cruises**
**Aurora (416) 969-8100; St. Catharines (905) 934-4414**
**Henny Vuyk 934-0666**

**CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SERVICES**

Providing counselling in **estate planning, will making, insurances, Christian investments,** and **special giving.**

- *Free of charge — Confidential*
- *Public presentation — Home visits*

Please write: **CSS**, 455 Spadina Ave., #210, Toronto, ON M5S 2G8 or telephone: **(416) 598-2181**

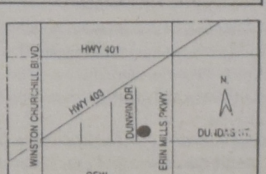
**TIME FOR NEW FURNITURE?**

Come and see our beautiful showroom with the European flair!

**SCHRÖDER FURNITURE**

**... for that special item!**

**Our "coil" spring furniture has all the support and comfort you need.**




**Mississauga, Dundas St. — 2 Blocks W. of Erin Mills Parkway (905) 828-9511**

Editorial

# *Do Christians deserve to be in the news?*

If there was one thing clear from the Faith and the Media conference held at Carleton University in Ottawa this month, it was that religion gets in the news only when it fits the media's notion of what its audience wants to consume. News is not considered newsworthy because people *need* to know about it. It's considered newsworthy because people *want* to know about it.

That paradigm immediately presents a problem for Christians. The gospel of the Kingdom is good news, and people desperately need to hear that good news. But they may not want to hear it. Is it less newsworthy because of that? To more satisfactorily do justice to that question, we publish Christian newspapers.

But what is a secular newspaper to do? Religion professor John Stackhouse's answer to that at the conference was that the media is not secular enough. It definitely has an anti-religion bias in general, and a strong slant against conservative Catholics and evangelical Protestants, in particular. For that reason it seldom does justice to the real feelings and beliefs of conservative Christians.

The good news about religion coverage is that ever since the 1993 religion poll published in *Maclean's* magazine, which, much to the surprise of the industry, revealed that faith matters a great deal to Canadians, editors and producers have been more willing to do stories on religion. A few dinosaurs like the *Globe and Mail* lag behind, but papers like the *Ottawa Citizen* and the Hamilton *Spectator* have recognized that publishing stories on faith makes good business sense.

The bad news is that the focus is often less on faith than on the consumer's interests. So "religious" stories on women's issues, deviance, bus crashes, cemetery defacements, scandals, justice issues, homosexuality, gambling and sports get into the papers because they have a natural appeal apart from the religious angle.

Gone are the days when the local paper would print last Sunday's sermon preached in John Knox Presbyterian Church for those who were unable to attend. Gone, too, are the days when loyalty to various religious institutions was strong and the fault lines between the various local churches ran deep. One of the jokes told at the conference seemed to come from another era: An Anglican bishop, lying on his deathbed, manages, between halting breaths, to tell his wife that he wants to convert to the United Church. When she asks why in heaven's name he would want to do such a thing, he whispers, "Better that one of *them* die than one of us."

## A sense of fairness

It was clear from listening to various editors and reporters of secular newspapers that the media does not want to be a mouthpiece of organized religion. This should not come as a surprise to Canadians living in a pluralist society. Nor should we object.

But, if the media do cover different religious institutions, they should adhere to a sense of proportional representation, to borrow a phrase from politics. This does not always happen since (according to a scan of papers done by journalist Lois Sweet) the two religious groups that get the most coverage are the Catholics and the Jews. It's understandable that Catholics get a lot of coverage since they comprise 38 per cent of the population, but why should Jews get so much when they and other non-Christian faith groups are only two per cent of the population?

## Television a wasteland

The problem with religious coverage is that every-day religion is not that important to the average Canadian, according to sociology professor Reginald Bibby. Not only do we live in a pluralist society, we live in a society where faith knowledge is minimal and, unless people see a connection with the things they care about, they will tune out.

High-profile religious persons like the Pope, the Dalai Lama and Mother Teresa when she was alive, do get covered regularly, but there are no Canadian heroes in this field.

Television is perhaps the worst offender when it comes to leaving out religion. At least two speakers mentioned that if an alien were to spend a week on earth watching television (s)he would have no clue that the vast majority of Canadians think religion is important.

So there is good news and bad news when it comes to the question of how well the media cover religion and faith in Canada.

## We are the media

What Canadians are interested in is hearing stories of genuine faith and practice, stories that show how faith is integrated into the daily fabric of life. This may seem to contradict the finding that the average Canadian is not all that interested in every-day religion. But a distinction must be made here between "religion" and "faith."

Religion usually means organized religion and institutional expressions of faith. But when a broken gas line causes an explosion in a soup kitchen in Montreal, killing three women volunteers, people are deeply interested in reading about the dedication and faith of the Grey Nuns who operate the kitchen. Note, however, that it's the explosion and the deaths that "carry" the story.

Maybe we have to be reminded of the Apostle Paul's instruction that we should be living letters of Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God (2 Cor. 3:3). In other words, the reason we are not newsworthy may be because we don't put our lives on the line, because we don't practise what we preach.

## A task awaits

That's not to say that the media is *necessarily* interested in stories of integrity and service. A story often has to have a certain pizzazz before it catches the eye of a reporter. The hype that surrounded Princess Diana in life and death speaks volumes about what editors prefer and what sells papers.

But that should not become an excuse for us to make it easy for editors to keep religion and faith out of the news. The reason the Catholics and the Jews do fairly well has a lot to do with the fact that they make it a point to monitor the news and to make their presence known. They have people appointed for that very task. We Protestants should, in that sense, become more media aware and more media active. We owe it to the public, in solidarity with whom we share our space on earth. We owe it to Jesus, who asked us to let our light shine before all people.

BW

**Christian Courier**

**Formerly known as Calvinist Contact**
**Founded in 1945**

*An independent weekly that seeks to:*
- *report on significant events in the Christian community and the world;*
- *express opinions infused by Scripture and rooted in a Reformed perspective;*
- *provide contact for the Christian community.*

**CHRISTIAN COURIER STAFF**

**Editor:** Bert Witvoet **cceditor@aol.com**
**Publisher:** Stan de Jong **ccjournal@aol.com**
**Associate Editor:** Marian Van Til **cceditor2@aol.com**
**Reporter, Layout:** Alan Doerksen **ccjournal@aol.com**
**Circulation Manager:** Grace Bowman **ccsubscrip@aol.com**
**Advertising, Layout:** Ingrid Torn **ccadverts@aol.com**

**REGIONAL REPORTERS:**

Jeff Hoogendoorn, Victoria; James Kwantes, Vancouver; Cindy Bruin, Calgary; Gordon Legge, Calgary; Jane Ouwehand, Agassiz, B.C.; Jessie Schut, Edmonton; Valerie Walker, Halifax; Robert VanderVennen, Toronto

**EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Wendy Saunders, Margaret Griffioen-Drenth, Doug Roorda, Harry der Nederlanden, Erick Schuringa, Nelly Westerhoff.

The publication of comments, opinions or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by *Christian Courier* or the publisher. Please contact the publisher if you cannot afford the subscription price but want to receive *Christian Courier.*

**Christian Courier**
**4-261 Martindale Rd/. St. Catharines, ON, L2W 1A1**
**Tel: (905) 682-8311;**
**Fax: (905) 682-8313;**
**E-mail: cceditor@aol.com**

# Court's decision protects all

Redeemer College political science professor David Koyzis expresses concerns about the possible implications of the recent Supreme Court of Canada ruling Delwin Vriend v. Alberta in his column "The eschatology of right protections" (CC May 29).

Koyzis contends that "the Court's decision appears to be based on a rather problematic conception of its own historic role in the protection of human rights." He claims that "in both the U.S. and Canada, the judiciary has been captivated by a global vision of its own role in extending rights previously denied."

He also asserts: "What is insufficiently recognized is that governments, including legislatures and courts, are not in the business of simply protecting rights. Rather they are called upon to settle disputes that arise out of conflicting rights claims."

Thus, he argues, "Many Christians are uneasy about the Vriend ruling ... because they understandably fear that such a ruling may effectively erode religious freedom by prohibiting Christian communities from upholding biblical standards of behavior among their members."

### Respect for all rights

As I (and various lawyers) understand the Supreme Court's decision, it focuses on the legal principles of equal justice and fair treatment that must be practiced by our governments and their human-rights commissions.

Therefore, as I see the issue of legal-equality rights for all Canadians, "No one should be discriminated against in the exercise of their public rights and responsibilities; nor should any one or group be denied proper recourse to the legal mechanisms set up to deal with formal complaints of discrimination and to adjudicate between conflicting rights. All Canadians are equally entitled to the equitable protection of our governments and laws." (*Catalyst*, May-June, 1998) Indeed, in our democratic society the citizenship rights of all Canadians must be respected equally and consistently across Canada.

So, in short, what was basically at issue was whether Delwin Vriend as a citizen (and other Albertans) are legally entitled to have their civil rights determined by the Alberta Human Rights Commission.

I've held this view of legal-equality based on public justice for all ever since I worked on obtaining (1) government-certification for the Christian Labour Association of Canada; (2) independent degree-granting status for the Institute for Christian Studies; (3) CRTC approval for Canada's Interfaith Network VISION TV; and public funding for independent schools and for alternative schools and voluntary religious education programs in Ontario's schools.

And that's why I now support Trinity Western University in B.C. in its legal fight to have the B.C. Supreme Court confirm TWU's institutional right to develop and maintain its Christian academic identity and campus community standards.

We should remember that religious institutions such as The King's College and the churches continue to be legally entitled to their constitutional freedom of religion and legal right to establish and enforce particular employment practices. The Court's recent decision does not interfere with this established right in Alberta and federal rights legislation.

CPJ continues to advocate the basic need for fair laws and public policies that justly protect the respective rights and responsibilities of the diverse faith and values communities that constitute the Canadian mosaic.

We also continue to emphasize the essential distinction between government policy, which deals with the public rights and responsibilities of all citizens, and church policy, which deals with the denominational rights and responsibilities of church members.

So, I would contend that our governments should protect human rights *and* settle conflicting human rights claims on the basis of a public justice principles that equally protect all in the exercise of their public rights and public responsibilities.

**Gerald Vandezande**
**Citizens for Public Justice**
**Toronto, Ont.**

# *What about the authority of scientific truth?*

I appreciate the thoughtful manner in which Martin Kaldeway (June 5) responded to my previous letter (May 22). However, I am sorry that he completely missed my point. I was not speaking from a "subjective, humanist perspective" as he claims, but entirely from within the perspective of *Synod '73* itself. His views do not concur with the report since he is using Scripture to invent an illness that does not exist.

To accuse gay people like myself of having a "destructive personality disorder" is to say in effect: "It really doesn't matter what your doctor has to say; I still think you are sick." Other denominations may cherish this privilege, but *Synod '73* does not give the Christian Reformed Church this option if section F, point 4 is being taken seriously today. It claims that the church is obliged to "recognize the authority of scientific truth" when interpreting Scripture, and while recognizing the prior authority of Scripture, try "to bring the two together insofar as possible" (622).

Here we have another contradiction. The medical material within *Synod '73* was based solely on the research of mental patients and was discredited six months after the report was published. Even though it's been twenty-four years since valid medical research was concluded that gays and lesbians are not mentally ill, the church has yet to even *acknowledge* that our medical status has changed, let alone deal with the implications that this has on the conclusions of Scripture.

**Don Baxter**
**Toronto, Ont.**

# Humanists distort history

Alan Doerksen's article on humanism in your March 27 issue is for me like watching a 10th rerun of a Three Stooges movie. Doerksen had to maintain a reporter's objectivity but I thankfully do not. I have done battle with a couple of local humanists for several years with letters to the editor.

These men are so lacking in their understanding of human nature, history and of religion that one cannot help but snicker at some of the insights they offer.

The most obvious catalyst for their views is a deep prejudice against Christianity and a desire to rob people of freedom to believe as they wish and to deny them their human rights. When they talk about the elimination of any references to God from our constitution they are in fact challenging people's right to influence the constitution and the kind of country they live in.

They always begin with the harm religion has done, which of course means Christianity. I have yet to see one of them discredit the Jewish religion or any other. They know the Christian community is the only religious community in the world that is without any protection from false accusation and slander. People can say anything they like about us.

The gross distortion of the history and nature of the church is secular humanism's chief accomplishment and character. We are blamed for the Crusades and Inquisitions, the oppression of societies and the stifling of human development and progress.

Yet, there has been so much evil done by people who either left the church or were never a part of it that it dwarfs the sins of the church. It is true we have had our problems and we should not gloss them over.

Nor should we ignore or deny the services of Christianity to humankind. Humanists seldom if ever mention that the very large portion of volunteer work in the community is done by Christian people and that a very large percentage of donated dollars come from the Christian community (up to 80 per cent).

It was the church which challenged slavery in the United States long before it was abolished. Some Christians like Abe Lincoln had slaves, but that doesn't diminish the fact that they freed them and changed the Constitution of that country to make slavery illegal.

Respect for women and equality for them is also a central theme of Scripture, one which can be seen by anyone who doesn't approach the Scriptures with a pre-programmed hatred for the church.

**Walfried E. Goossen**
**Dundas, Ont.**


## Christian Courier

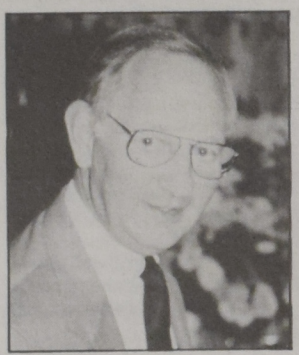
Member of Canadian Church Press and Evangelical Press Association.
**Canada mail:** Publications Mail Registration No. 0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ont. Postmaster: send address changes to Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, Ont. L2W 1A1.
**U.S. mail:** Christian Courier (USPS 518-090). Second-class postage paid at Lewiston, NY. Postmaster: send address changes to Christian Courier, Box 110, Lewiston, NY 14092.

| **Subscriptions:** (effective Feb. 1, 1995) | **Canada** (GST incl.) | **U.S.A.** (GST free) |
|---|---|---|
| one year (44 issues) | $43.50 | $35.00 U.S. |
| two years (88 issues) | $82.00 | $66.00 U.S. |
| three years (132 issues) | $123.00 | $99.00 U.S. |
| overseas one year | $135 airmail | $85.00 surface mail |

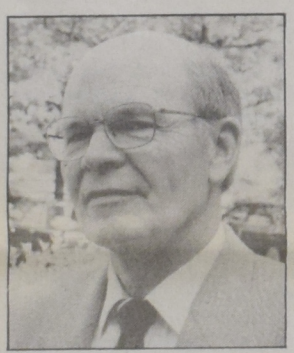
**Advertising deadlines:** display advertising: Wednesday, 8:30 a.m.; classified advertising: Thursday, 8:30 a.m. All deadlines are for the following week's issue. See classified pages for more details. Advertising rate sheets available.
(ISSN 1192-3415) Published weekly on Fridays except for Feb. 27, April 10, June 12, July 10, Aug. 14, Oct. 2, Nov. 27, and Dec. 25.
Address all correspondence to: 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, Ont. L2W 1A1, Tel.: 905-682-8311 or fax: 905-682-8313, e-mail: subscriptions: ccsubscrip@aol.com, advertising: ccadverts@aol.com
**PRINTED IN CANADA**
This tabloid contains recycled paper.

CRC Synod '98 | All stories and photos by Marian Van Til

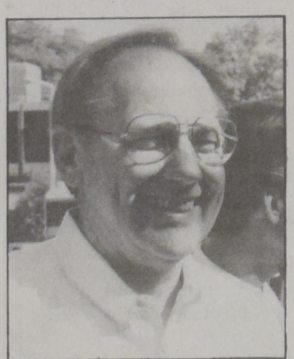
# *Canadians Vos, Nicolai among synod execs*



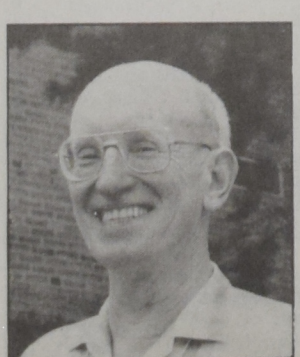
*Howard Vanderwell*



*Jack Vos*



*Stanley Koster*



*Peter Nicolai*

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Saturday, June 13, was the first day of a week of meetings of the 1998 General Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America meeting here at Calvin College. That's when the gathering elected two Americans and two Canadians as this year's executive officers.

Elected president was Howard Vanderwell, longtime pastor of Hillcrest CRC in Hudsonville, Mich., and a delegate to nine previous synods. In four of those nine visits to synod, Vanderwell was on the executive, including two previous turns as president.

Chosen as vice-president was Jack Vos, pastor of First CRC, Barrie, Ont., who also had considerable previous experience as both a delegate and executive officer. Before 1998, Vos was a synod delegate 12 times, had served as vice-president five times and as first clerk once.

### Ask for wisdom

Elected first clerk was elder delegate Stanley Koster, a member of Bethany CRC, Holland, Mich. Koster was at synod twice before.

Rounding out the 50 per cent Canadian content of the synod was Peter Nicolai, pastor of Grace CRC in Chatham, Ont., who was elected second clerk. Prevously, Nicolai was a delegate five times but never before served on its executive.

In Vanderwell's opening remarks as president he told the delegates he hoped that synod's lightest agenda in years might "be a healthy, wholesome time for us and for the denomination." Quoting James 1:5, he urged delegates to pray for wisdom in their thoughts and speech: "'If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God.'"

Vanderwell concluded, "Here's one prayer you can know is God's will. I urge you to claim this verse during your devotions this week."

## Electronic voting debuts

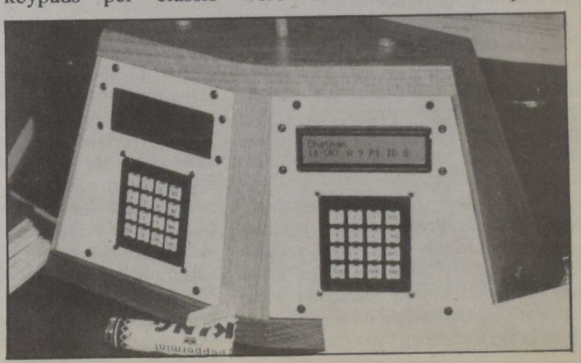
Thanks to the Calvin College Engineering Department, which devised a system for electronic voting, the era of the paper ballot at synod has ended. For the first time, electronic voting was used whenever voting would have been done by ballot or roll call.

The voice vote, as the most efficient method, was still used a substantial amount of the time when deciding synod business. But the electronic system speeded things up considerably when paper ballots approving Calvin College faculty, church agency board members, or other lists of persons would have been used in the past.

The system allowed delegates to vote Yes, No or Abstain; or to punch in numbers which corresponded, on given votes, with the names of candidates being considered.

Each of the four delegates per classis had his own keypad on which he could register his votes. The four keypads per classis were mounted on a central island on each table, two facing one side of the table, two facing the other side (see photo).

Early on, as delegates were getting used to the novelty of the system, one sparked laughter when he asked if his keypad would allow him to order a pizza.



# *Banner* role clarified

Synod 1998 confirmed and clarified the manner in which *The Banner*, the biweekly voice of the denomination, publishes its news and views.

Synod officially adopted a set of guidelines in use since 1993 by CRC Publications, which publishes *The Banner*. The guidelines outline *The Banner's* "freedoms and responsibilities" and how those freedoms and responsibilities should be balanced, an issue which came up earlier this year in connection with the reporting of the IRM real estate troubles.

### Troubling situation

Members of the CRC were informed in the Dec. 8, 1997, issue of *The Banner* that IRM Corporation, a real estate venture in which various church agencies and a number of individual members had invested was unable to pay on those investments.

IRM, *The Banner* reported, had "decided to suspend all principal and interest payments and loan payoffs on [its] investor notes, as well as all partnership distributions to [its] investors...."

Because "several Christian Reformed Church agencies and institutions, as well as other closely related Christian organizations" had investments with IRM, the executive committee of the church's board of trustees appointed a committee to "represent the interests of those agencies, institutions and organizations," said *The Banner*.

### Investigation squelched

However, at the end of that story, *Banner* editor John Suk informed readers that the board of trustees was prohibiting the church magazine from investigating the situation, which Suk believed to be "in conflict with synodically approved guidelines covering *The Banner's* accountability and freedom."

The board of trustees said in a letter to church councils that it had been advised by legal counsel for the CRC " to be extremely careful in how the IRM concerns are dealt with, considering the limited amount of information that is available." Thus, it wanted *The Banner* to refrain from public comment unless approved by the "oversight" committee it had appointed to look into the matter.

### Opposed to restriction

Eventhough the ban was soon lifted, Classis Lake Erie sent an overture to synod asking that the editorial freedom of *The Banner* be ensured and stating its opinion that *The Banner's* investigation of the story would not have hampered the committee's work. In fact, *The Banner* could have diffused the many stories that immediately began circulating about the IRM situation, said the Lake Erie's overture.

By the time this issue came to synod, Editor Suk and CRC Publications had come to a mutual understanding with CRC director of ministries Peter Borgdorff and the board of trustees. Still, Synod felt that it would be beneficial to the church to reiterate the "lines of accountability."

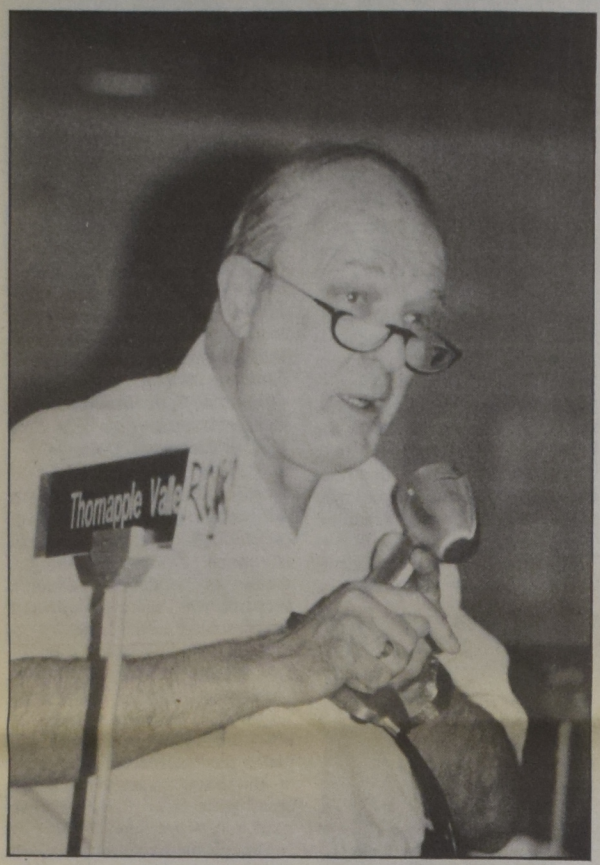
### Free to print unpopular news

The guidelines say that in order to carry out its responsibilities, *The Banner* editorial staff must be granted the freedom to "inform its readers and subscribers about what is occurring in the church (including relevant problems, needs, and concerns) even though some persons, congregations, or agencies may prefer that such information not be disseminated."

John Suk acknowledged that "there was always a collegial desire to work this out" and was happy with the way synod handled the matter. "By adopting this," he said, "synod put an exclamation mark behind the principle of editorial freedom for *The Banner*."

CRC Synod '98

# Officebearers 'Form of Subscription' won't change — yet



*Elder Cornelius Korhorn of Thornapple Valley defends his classis' overture to revise the Form of Subscription.*

**Marian Van Til**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — If you become a minister, evangelist, elder or deacon in the Christian Reformed Church you must sign your assent to a "Form of Subscription." You must agree, among other things, that "all the articles and points of doctrine set forth in the *Belgic Confession*, the *Heidelberg Catechism* and the *Canons of Dort* fully agree with the Word of God."

An officebearer is obligated to "diligently teach and faithfully defend" all the doctrines contained in the confessions, and must not speak or write about any difficulties of assent he or she may have until having disclosed those misgivings to the proper church authorities, which authorities will then examine those difficulties.

Objecting to those conditions, Classis Thornapple Valley (Michigan) told synod that the form needs to be revised in more ways than one. First, said the classis, it needs "to reflect the fallibility of all human work."

The classis argued that "even making full allowance for the fact that the doctrines in the creeds are not necessarily stated in the best possible manner and that the creeds do not say everything about them that can be said (see Church Order Supplement, Art. 5), since the creeds are human and, therefore, fallible formulations, no claim should be made that they *'fully agree'* [italics theirs] with the Word of God."

## Mental reservations

Human formulations, even church confessions, ought "always to be subject to ongoing scrutiny and revision," said Thornapple Valley. The fact that the CRC has occasionally seen fit to make changes in the confessions are indications that it is not true "that all these doctrines 'fully agree' with the Word of God."

The classis also argued that the form's present wording "promotes signing it with mental reservations," precisely because it requires that a signer agree "without reservation" to all the doctrines contained in the standards of the church. It thus deprives the church of the services of those, who, though very capable, cannot sign this document which hasn't been substantially revised since the 1618-1619 Synod of Dortrecht.

Thornapple Valley further asserted that requiring all officebearers to "diligently teach and faithful defend" the church's doctrines "does not reckon with the individual gifts and separate responsibilities of ministers, elders and deacons."

The classis felt, too, that prohibiting officebearers from speaking or writing about disagreements with church doctrine "inhibits free, Spirit-guided theological reflection and study and does not reflect realistically how theology is developed in the twentieth century."

## Not necessary?

The synodical advisory committee assigned to the matter, however, recommended that a study of the form (with a view to changing it) not be undertaken. In the vote, synod agreed.

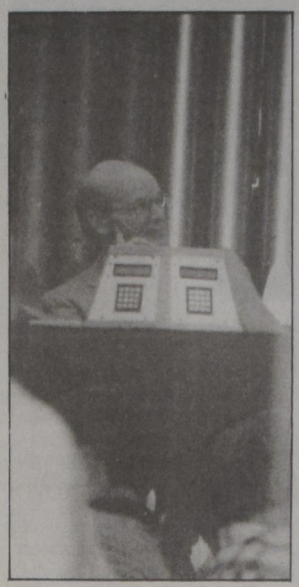
However, it was clear from the lengthy discussion that there was a consensus that the form *does* need updating and clearer language, and that a careful study of the matter is in order — but not now.

The advisory committee argued, first, that guidelines as to the form's meaning were already adopted in 1976 (*Acts of Synod 1976*, Art. 64). Then, that the Form of Subscription is not intended "to function as a mandate or job description for the various signers, and the promise 'to teach these doctrines diligently' ought to be interpreted in a manner appropriate to the function or office of the signer and the corporate nature of the offices.

Thirdly, that "the question of freedom to speak or write about theological difficulties has also been dealt with previously, also by Synod 1976 (also in the *Acts of Synod* article cited above).

The Thornapple Valley overture would have prescribed specific parameters for studying the matter, which seemed too narrow to many delegates. So they sided with their advisory committee in not acceding to the overture.

Synod vice-president Jack Vos (minister, Classis Toronto) seemed to sway a number of delegates when he told of his own process of thinking on the matter. He concluded that "it [the form ] is not at all suitable" to be used as it's being currently used for officbearers. But even so, in the process of change "we should take this one step at a time" because there is still unrest in the church [over the major changes of recent years and schism relating to ordaining women].



*Jack Vos contemplates the debate.*

## Need 'confessional creativity'

Vos called for being "creative, confessionally" — as the CRC was when it wrote and adopted The *Contemporary Testimony*, realizing that "change does not automatically mean deterioration and falling away from Scripture."

Elder Steve Baas of Classis Wisconsin asserted that the Form of Subscription "is not some sort of gag order on the confessional creativity of the church.... It is something that ordained officials sign that says how we will discuss issues. It gives privilege *and* responsibility; it places some constraints on us and provides a way to disagree."

## One form for all

Several delegates pointed out that if elders cannot teach and defend Reformed doctrines, and have never even read the confessions, as it was noted that many hadn't, that is a very good argument for the better education of elders, not necessarily for revising the Form of Subscription.

Other delegates urged that the document be reformulated in a manner that is consistent with how theology is done today and which can be understood by all officebearers, including those of the ethnic and racial minorities in the church.

Synod minority advisor Rev. Dante Venegas said he liked what Rev. Vos had to say, but urged the delegates to act now to change the form. "That will tell us you take us seriously," he said.

A white minister delegate from Classis Red Mesa, which is largely Navajo, expressed surprise at General Secretary David Engelhard's statement that there has already existed since the mid-'80s an "alternate" Form of Subscription which originated to address the situation in Classis Red Mesa.

He saw a separate form or forms for ethnic and racial minorities as condescending, asserting, "We need *one* form that we can all sign; we're one church."

Given the direction of those sentiments, many felt that though this synod opted not to study the form, such a study may yet happen in the near future.

## *Synod in Ontario in '99*

While synod's normal home is the Fine Arts Center at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., it occasionally packs up and moves elsewhere to give other institutions a chance to play host, and church members in other geographical areas a chance to see its leaders in operation. Next year, synod will meet in Canada for the first time, on the campus of Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont. And in 2003 it will meet at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, as it has done only twice before in the church's history.

CRC Synod '98

# CRC endorses dialogue with Catholics re: the Mass

**Marian Van Til**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — While refusing to remove language from the *Heidelberg Catechism* which calls the Roman Catholic mass "a condemnable idolatry," the CRC synod decided, nonetheless, to "make an attempt to dialogue with the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church to clarify the official doctrine of that church concerning the Mass."

In the interest of ecumenical relations and being a "kinder, gentler" church than that of the polemical 16th century or even of the recent past, Classis Lake Erie had overtured synod to relegate to an appendix at the back of the catechism some particularly biting language against the Catholic Mass.

The *Heidelberg Catechism's* Question and Answer 80 calls the Mass "nothing but ... a condemnable idolatry" because the Catholic Church teaches that Christ is bodily present in the communion bread and wine. That phrase concludes the catechism's answer to how the Lord's Supper differs from the Roman Catholic Mass.

Answer 80, in whole, reads (in modern translation): *The Lord's Supper delcares to us that our sins have been completely forgiven through the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ which he himself finished on the cross once for all. It also declares to us that the Holy Spirit grafts us into Christ, who with his very body is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father where he wants us to worship him.*

*But the Mass teaches that the living and the dead do not have their sins forgiven through the suffering of Christ unless Christ is still offered for them daily by the priests. It also teaches that Christ is bodily present in the form of bread and wine where Christ is therefore to be worshiped. Thus the Mass is basically nothing but a denial of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ and a condemnable idolatry.*

## Out of sight, out of mind

Classis Lake Erie specifically wanted this question and answer removed from the text of the catechism and put in an appendix, "with an appropriate introduction indicating when Q. & A. 80 was included by the authors and when it was removed by the Christian Reformed Church."

The question's devisive language, said the council of First CRC of Detroit, which brought the issue to Classis Lake Erie, "has become a concern ... because of our increasing association with our brothers and sisters in the Roman Catholic Church," including inter-marriage with Catholics.

*Rev. Herm Van Niejenhuis of Willowdale CRC, Toronto: Relating to the Catholic Church in North, not South, America.*

## No longer persuasive

Lake Erie's overture noted that two decades ago, Synod 1977 declined to make changes in Q. & A. 80, saying it was "not a troublesome issue for the churches."

Synod 1977 noted that "a historical creed must not be altered without weighty reasons"; that "it appears to be historically accurate — the Council of Trent statements which Q. & A. 80 rejects have not been "repudiated" by the Catholic Church"; such "indignation" is not inapproprate to a confessional statement" (Trent spoke sharply as well); and that it must be understood in terms of its main emphasis, which is "our assurance of salvation through the 'full pardon of our sins by Christ's only sacrifice.'"

Classis Lake Erie asserted that those grounds are "much less persuasive in today's context." At the time, the CRC was consumed with its contentious debate about ordaining women, nor were there today's frequent contacts with Catholics.

Lake Erie agreed that weighty reasons are needed to alter a historic confession (as in 1958 and 1985, when the *Belgic Confession* was modified), but the "practice of basic love, unity, and understanding based on current contact with Roman Catholic believers" *is* weighty.

Classis noted that churches rarely "repudiate" previous positions, though, over time, they do change them.

As proof, classis noted statements on justification by faith between Catholics and various other Christians, and it referred to the 1969 *Baltimore Catechism's* statement on the Mass:

*On the cross Christ physically shed his blood and was physically slain, while in the Mass there is no physical shedding of blood nor physical death, because Christ can die no more; on the cross Christ gained merit and satisfied for us, while in the Mass he applies to us the merits and satisfaction of his death on the cross.*

It pointed out that the Roman Catholic Church confesses the same ecumenical creeds as those confessed by the CRCNA — the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed. It also noted that Q. & A. 80 was not in the original catechism, but was added only as a response to statements made by the (Roman Catholic) Council of Trent in 1563.

Personal stories weighed heavily with delegates. Several Latin American, former Catholic delegates argued for retaining the Q. & A. 80. Others told stories of former Catholics in their congregations expressing the same sentiments.

## Can we judge?

But Homer Samplonius (pastor, Classis Alberta North) assured delegates that "not all former Catholics feel that way." Samplonius's problem was "not so much the substance but the language."

He told of former Catholics in his congregation asking him in distress: "'Am I to believe that my parents who are still Catholics are "condemnable idolaters" every time they go to Mass?' I tell them No."

Herm Van Niejenhuis (pastor, Classis Toronto) reminded fellow delegates that "we're relating to the Catholic Church in North America," which is very different than that in South America and parts of Asia.

"In those areas that church has not confronted the Reformation as it has in North America and Europe." One of synod's ethnic advisors, a former Latin American Catholic agreed with Van Niejenhuis.

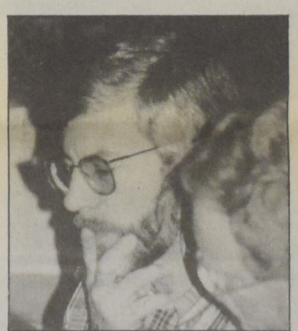
Leonard Riemersma (pastor, Lake Erie) also frankly admitted that when he teaches the catechism "we skip over this question. It's an embarrassment. This is not the way to deal with another denomination. To have one statement in there *against* another denomination is not right."

## Sacrificial language

Some delegates not only didn't like the harsh languuage, but wondered to what extent the catechism is still accurate in its characterization of the Mass, and whether synod could accurately judge such a thing.

Said Joel Kok (pastor, Classis Hackensack), "We are not in a position to make a judgment about Roman Catholic doctrine when all kinds of delegates admitted [in the discussion on the Form of Subscription] they hardly know our own doctrine. But I look forward to dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church."

Dr. John Bolt, synod advisor, Calvin Seminary professor of systematic theology and graduate-degree holder from a Roman Catholic institution, suggested that Lake Erie's overture had flawed grounds. He said while it was true that "justification by faith" has been agreed upon between Catholics and Evangelicals, "there's still sacrificial language in the way the Catholic Church talks about the Mass. In [the much talked about agreement called] *Catholics and Evangelicals Together* that was still acknowledged as a point of disagreement."



*Rev. Ed Laarman of Covenant CRC, Appleton, Wisc.: "We see it as either/or; they see it as both/ and."*

Ed Laarmen (pastor, Classis Wisconsin) didn't deny that, but he told delegates we misunderstand the Catholic language and position. Quoting from the most recent *Catholic Catechism* (1994), he read: "When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, she commemorates Christ's Passover, and it is made present: the sacrifice Christ offered once for all on the cross remains ever present" [Sect. 1364]. Laarman continued, "Ours is either/or; theirs is both/and. Christ's sacrifice was 'once for all' and 're-presented' in the Mass."

*Paul Bakker in a rare moment of rest: spokesperson for an "activist classis" and self-confessed "salmon swimming upstream." Originally from Hamilton, Ont., Bakker is pastor of West Park CRC in Cleveland, Ohio.*

## Let's talk

Laarman said he had been prepared to read much more of how the Catholic Church explains the "sacrificial character" of the Mass so that delegates could get a clear picture of that issue.

Though the harsh language of the catechism bothered many delegates, most were content not to discuss the substance of the issue. And a number were reluctant to "change the Confessions on the floor of synod."

Yet a large majority were quite willing to agree with the delegate who noted, "The Council of Trent basically told the Reformers that if they didn't believe what they believed about the Mass, they could, literally, go to hell. Then we responded by telling them if they didn't see it *our* way, *they* could go to hell. And we's been glaring across the fence at each other ever since. It's time to quit glaring across the fence from each other and start talking."

That's what synod voted to do, initially focussing on our our very different views of the Eucharist. The Inter-church Relations Committee was given the task of starting the dialogue.

***Look for more synod stories next week.***

# Canadian approved as U.S. head of CRWRC

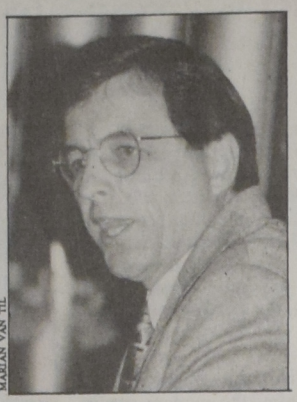
**Marian Van Til**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Canadian agronomist Andrew Ryskamp was unanimously approved by the CRC synod as director of the U.S. branch of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC).

Ryskamp, a native of Wyoming, Ont., was educated at Ridgetown College of Agriculture Technology, Ridgetown, Ont. (Associate Degree in agribusiness), the University of Guelph (courses in agriculture science), Calvin College (BA in business, economics and sociology) and at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo (Master of Development Administration).

Ryskamp speaks Dutch, Bengali and Tagalog as well as English and has a long history of working for CRWRC in various capacities. He lived in Bangladesh as CRWRC project director from 1974-76 and was in the Philippines from 1980-83 as CRWRC acting director and community developer there, and was also acting director for Sierra Leone for a year.

Ryskamp has lived in the U.S. since the mid-1980s as director of CRWRC-U.S.'s diaconal ministries, and most recently as CRWRC's director of U.S. ministries. He is married and has two sons.



MARIAN VAN TIL

*Andrew Ryskamp*

In his personal mission statement Ryskamp says, "I want to honor God in every aspect of my life so that others can readily see Christ through me and I can speak boldly of the hope I have in him." He says he tries, in all his roles in family, church, work and community to exemplify the biblical values of love, justice, servanthood, integrity and learning.

# *What about those women candidates?*

**Marian Van Til**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — The issue of women as ministers is still haunting some parts of the church, and some synod delegates. Thus, when delegates were asked to approve the candidacy of 29 seminary graduates, four of whom are women, synod agreed that it did not want to offend those who still oppose ordaining women. So it decided to allow delegates to approve the candidates individually.

Delegates opposing women as ministerial candidates could abstain from voting or vote No while still voting for the male candidates. They were told, however, that abstaining would really be the proper response. That's because in 1995 it was decided that allowance needed to be made for dissenters to refrain from participating in the process of approving women for office. So candidates were divided into two groups by gender, and those opposing women in office could opt out of the vote by abstaining from voting for the women candidates. (Voting No would be participating in the process.)

That method was objected to this year by Classis Lake Erie as demeaning and painful to the women candidates. The classis asked that all candidates of both genders be approved together. As a compromise, synod chose to allow delegates to vote for the candidates one at a time.

The votes were tallied electronically and the computer counted only totals, not who voted how. Thus, all the candidates were approved, and no one but the clerks knew how many abstentions or negative votes there had been.

The process took about 20 seconds per candidate from the time delegates simultaneously pressed their votes into their keypads to the time the computer on the dais registered the total votes.

# *Brothers and Sisters*

## Chapter & Verse

Wayne Brouwer
Andrew Kuyvenhoven
Laura Smit
● Al Wolters

*Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown....* (Phil 4:1, NIV).

*Dear brothers and sisters, I love you and long to see you, for you are my joy and the reward for my work.* (Phil 4:1, NLB)

There is probably no one who would dispute that the apostle Paul, in writing these words, is addressing them to both the men and the women of the church at Philippi. As a consequence, it is common today to add "and sisters" to the traditional wording "brothers" of the biblical text in passages like this one. Not only is this addition often made orally in public readings of translations like the Revised Standard Version and the New International Version, but recent translations of the Bible, like the New Living Bible (in which I was privileged to have a hand), actually make the addition "and sisters" part of the translation. Since the original Greek here has only the single word *adelphoi*, which is grammatically masculine, isn't this new way of reading and translating evidence of playing fast and loose with the words of Scripture? Since the use of masculine terminology in an inclusive way is common to both Greek and English, why not let "brothers" stand here by itself?

In my opinion, there is a good deal of validity to this line of argument when it is applied in general to the modern tendency to to make Bible translations inclusive. However, in the case of Greek *adelphoi*, I believe it is mistaken. There is considerable linguistic evidence that this Greek word not only *refers to* both brothers and sisters, but also *means* "brothers and sisters." (The linguistic distinction between "reference" and "meaning" is an important one, but it is frequently ignored.) And since translation of a word aims at capturing its lexical *meaning*, the newer rendering of *adelphoi* is philologically warranted. Let me explain.

### "Siblings" in Greek

Unlike most languages, Greek does not have two entirely different words for "brother" and "sister." Instead, it uses the masculine and feminine form of the same word: *adelphos* for "brother," and *adelphe* for "sister." You might say that the basic form of the word which both share, namely *adelph-* means "sibling." In order to express the notion of "siblings" (i.e. "brothers and sisters") Greek uses the masculine plural form *adelphoi* — masculine for grammatical reasons (as the so-called "default" gender in Greek).

It is clear from many passages in Greek literature that *adelphoi* means "siblings." One example is a papyrus found in Egypt, dated to 97 AD, which refers to the beneficiaries of a will as "my *adelphoi* Diodorus [a man's name] and Thais [a woman's name]." A passage in Euripides reads: "his mother and my father are *adelphoi*." In Hellenistic Egypt, the royal couple were called "the divine Iadelphoi," consisting of a brother and a sister. Similarly, in Luke 21:16, where Jesus says: "You will be betrayed even by parents, *adelphoi*elatives and friends," it is clear that each category refers to both men and women.

### Not politically correct

These examples are taken from the most authoritative dictionary of New Testament Greek (known as "BAGD" to scholars). At the beginning of this standard work is an introductory essay, first published in 1955, by the original author of the dictionary, Walter Bauer. Among other things he writes (p.xxvii): "There is no longer any doubt in my mind that *adelphoi* can mean 'brothers and sisters' in any number," and adds some further examples from ancient Greek writings. It is significant that Bauer wrote these words long before the push for "inclusive language."

Whatever we may think of the linguistic merits of actually translating *adelphoi* as "brothers and sisters," it is clear that Paul included women in this expression. This is especially clear in the present context, since the very next verse reads as follows: "I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, loyal yoke-fellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel." It is also quite probable that among Paul's addressees was Lydia, the founding member of the church in Philippi (Acts 16:14)

*Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. He has a special interest in matters of gender and language.*

ADA REALTY LTD.
2011-137 Ave., Suite 404
Edmonton, AB
T5A 4W2
(403) 473-8149
*Sid Vandermeulen*
Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton and district.
*Het vertrouwde adres.*

Rates to June 30, 1998

| RRSP | Regular Fund |
|---|---|
| Approx. 5.0% | 4.95% |

Your funds will be invested in Christian Reformed Church and Christian school building projects in Canada.
CRC EXTENSION FUND
Fax: (416) 465-6367
Call: (416) 461-1207 evenings or write:
Christian Reformed Extension Fund
45 Harriet St., Toronto, ON M4L 2G1

# Faith and the Media Conference

## Cardinal calls the media anti-clerical and anti-religious

**Bert Witvoet**

OTTAWA — According to Cardinal Ambrozic of Toronto, the tension between the Christian faith and the media goes deeper than the question of accuracy. It has more to do with the inbred priorities of the media and the faith. The recently named cardinal spoke at the first plenary session of the Faith and the Media conference held at the Carleton University School of Journalism from June 7-9.

To illustrate the tension between faith and the media, the cardinal referred to the Messianic secret in the Gospel of Mark [his PhD thesis was on Mark, he said, because, according to a friend, it was the shortest gospel]. Jesus placed an embargo on the voice of God that proclaimed him to be the Son of God. A similar "do not publish" was placed on his miracles.

The media would have broken the embargo, said the cardinal, but would not have been interested in the self-emptying nature of the miracles. The modern media are interested in spreading the liberal ideology, which sees the individual as the centre and freedom from external limitations as the norm.

Ambrozic pointed to the failure of Christian democratic parties in Europe to Christianize public and political life. It is his "generalized suspicion" that these parties embraced too enthusiastically the political striving of a liberal democracy, which sees as the only limit to an individual's right, the right of another individual.

### No absolute claims

According to him, the modern media — the press first, then radio, then television and Internet — follow the same ideology, which is opposed to the absolute claims of the gospel, which did not originate from the individual but from God. The cardinal minced no words as he calmly suggested that the media are anti-clerical and anti-religious.

This tension between the Christian faith and the media is exacerbated by the built-in tension in advertising, said the cardinal. Advertising makes a perpetual appeal to our likes and dislikes and to our self-centredness, which runs counter to the gospel of obedience and self-sacrifice.

He pleaded with the media, "not that they agree with us, but that they see us with the eyes of a believer." The media must realize that their secularist view is not the only one in the world.

The cardinal ended by suggesting that every media person have a degree in history. "The less history is known, the more ideology flourishes," he said.

Cardinal Ambrozic

## *ABC reporter speaks both media and faith languages*

PHOTOS: BERT WITVOET

Peggy Wehmeyer

**Bert Witvoet**

Following Cardinal Ambrozic at the first plenary session of the Faith and the Media conference, but offering a complete contrast in person and presentation, was Peggy Wehmeyer of ABC's World News Tonight. Wehmeyer, a vivacious personality whose presentation included lots of anecdotes and video clips of interviews she had conducted, is the only correspondent reporting on religious issues for a major U.S. television network.

Wehmeyer confirmed that the media and people of faith speak two very different languages, but added that she was bilingual. Being a committed Christian, she knows what people of faith mean and she understands the world of "sound bites and quick shoots."

She explained that Ottawa-born Peter Jennings was behind the idea of having a religious reporter cover faith stories, and that being the only television religion reporter gives her an edge on some stories. She told how the parents of the Iowa septuplets were bombarded by requests for interviews but that they chose her to do the story.

Wehmeyer showed the audience a number of clips on a huge screen to demonstrate that faith stories can be honestly reported. Particularly revealing was a clip on two Christian mothers who took opposite sides on the issue of sex education and sensitivity sessions in the school.

According to Wehmeyer, if an alien were to visit North America and watch television for a while, he would not be able to tell that faith is important to North Americans. Yet 40 per cent of Americans go to church weekly and more than 60 per cent say that faith matters to them.

She spoke of a culture of disbelief that was prevalent in the media and how elite institutions treat religion with disdain. She also felt that some Christians are guilty of "tribalization," especially on such issues as abortion.

"Religion is considered too personal in the eyes of the media," she said. But she wondered why sex is not treated as being too personal.

If journalists were to choose a patron saint, it should be Doubting Thomas, she said in conclusion.

## Conrad Black appointees favor religion ... and profit

Neil Reynolds, editor of the *Ottawa Citizen* (left) and Kirk Lapointe, former editor of the Hamilton *Spectator* and newly appointed executive editor of a new Toronto daily planned by Conrad Black of Southam News, spoke positively of the importance of religion.

Reynolds defined a newspaper as "a daily journal of moral conduct," comparing articles to parables. "Morality asks, 'What is broken?' and 'Whose job is it to fix it?'" he added.

"We put God and his counterparts back on the front page," said Lapointe, "either in organized religion or in walks of life. Religion makes good business sense," he added.

One woman who responded to this Southam News panel, said that as a reader of a much improved *Ottawa Citizen*, she was opposed to having one man own so many newspapers, but if it had to be one man, she was glad it was Conrad Black.

# Faith and the Media Conference

## Canadians bored and journalists embarrassed by every-day faith stories

**Bert Witvoet**

At the second plenary session of the Faith and the Media conference, a panel of three speakers, moderated by Pamela Wallin, host of CBC Newsworld's the Pamela Wallin Show, addressed the question, "Is there faith in Canada, and do the media care?"

Reginald Bibby, professor of sociology at the University of Lethbridge, Alta., and author of survey-oriented books like *Fragmented Gods*, led off by saying that religion needs the media more than the media needs religion. He offered the finding that faith is not in decline in Canada and that it won't go away. At the same time he noted that organized religion is experiencing a falling off.

Whether the media cares depends on whether the Canadian public cares, said Bibby. Every-day religion is not that important to the average Canadian. The media will feature high-profile religious people like the Pope, the Dalai Lama and Mother Teresa when she was alive, but there are no Canadian heroes in the field of religion.

For the rest, the media will report on religion if it touches on issues that people already care about, said Bibby. He mentioned justice issues, bus crashes, defacement of tombstones, women's issues, sexuality, gambling or sport as suitable carriers for a religious angle.

### Media prefer the surface

According to panelist Andrew Grenville, senior vice-president for the Global Research division of the Angus Reid Group, the media covers religion as well as it understands it and as well as the faith presents itself.

"The media often fail to report on the underlying values of events and actions," he said. "To miss that is to miss the story."

Nicholas Hirst, editor of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, emphasized the difficulties he and his staff experience when reporting on religion. Declaring himself and his paper to be liberal, he said that religious people believe in absolutes, whereas the newspapers think there can be more than one way of looking at things.

He indicated that statements by Christians that something happened because of God are usually censored because these statements cause embarrassment to people who seek for a more natural explanation. He ended by saying that God may be above criticism, but his interpreters are not.

*More on page 12...*

**(From left to right): *Winnipeg Free Press* Editor Nicolas Hirst, Andrew Grenville of Angus Reid Group and Dr. Reginald Bibby. Top: Pamela Wallin.**

## Faith groups and media receive tips

**Alan Doerksen**

OTTAWA — "I believe the relationship between the church and the media will always be a little awkward," said Mary-Frances Denis, public relations director for the United Church of Canada, summarizing the feeling of several participants in a discussion on barriers to faith coverage.

To help bridge the gap between faith groups and the media, Denis offered a Top 10 List of suggestions for reporters covering religion. These included:

- check assumptions;
- recognize the limitations of your medium and avoid simplifying to the point of trivializing beliefs;
- don't assume that because you went to synagogue or Sunday school as a child that your knowledge of faith groups is up to date;
- tone down catastrophic conclusions and analysis (such as the coming demise of the United Church);
- don't sensationalize;
- don't limit faith stories to seasonal coverage.

### Speak out like Peter

Canada has a lack of informed faith coverage mainly because media places a low priority on faith, asserted Dennis Gruending, former English-language communications director for the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. "I believe there is a lack of enthusiasm for faith" among journalists, he said. "I'm convinced the problem is not a lack of knowledge."

Speaking from a media point of view, Royal Orr, a television producer who is a member of the United Church, explained that with faith issues, "what becomes covered is very much a product of individuals [writers, producers and editors] at story meetings."

Orr urged people of faith to be like the Apostle Peter in the Book of Acts and "go out into the forum and speak about what you believe, People will be amazed."

Alex Frame, director of programming for CBC English radio, explained "there is a vein in CBC radio which sees the need to explore spiritual matters." The program *Tapestry* is one example of this. At CBC, "there are a significant number of people who take religion seriously.... I'm a practicing Bahai," he explained. But he warned that news people are often "secular, skeptical and a hard-nosed bunch."

Casey Korstanje, religion and ethics editor for the Hamilton *Spectator*, explained that sometimes he is hesitant to approach faith groups because of their oversensitive reactions to coverage. He suggested faith groups contact reporters not only to pass on story ideas but to build relationships with them. Then, when a reporter needs information, he or she will know who to contact. Reporters can only be fair to faith groups "if we get to know you," he asserted.

### Avoid jargon!

Bill Phipps, moderator of the United Church, said that the media has treated him very well. He urged religious representatives not to use church language and to provide reporters with background before an interview.

# 'Religion sells,' says Maclean's editor

**Alan Doerksen**

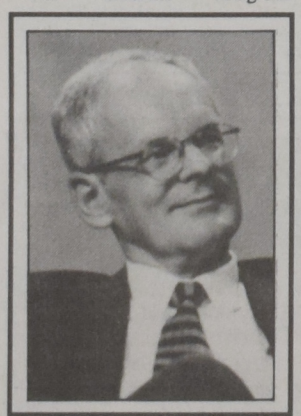
OTTAWA — At a town hall discussion of whether faith and media can really work together, William Thorsell, the editor-in-chief of the *Globe and Mail*, insisted he doesn't think most faith issues are newsworthy. But Robert Lewis, editor of *Maclean's*, disagreed, saying, "Religion sells!"

The panel, moderated by CBC-TV's Hana Gartner, included, besides Thorsell and Lewis, Sally Armstrong, editor of *Homemaker's* magazine; Rabbi Rueven Bulka, an Ottawa rabbi and media critic; Brian Stiller, president of Tyndale Seminary and former head of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada; Michael Markwick, executive director of the Catholic Civil Rights League; and Prof. Jamal Badawi, a Muslim leader and professor at St. Mary's University in Halifax.

Hana Gartner

Lewis expressed his interest in covering religious issues in *Maclean's*. "We cover religion and faith in a lot of areas in our publications," he said.

For accurate religious coverage, "fairness, talking to all sides has to be crucial," Lewis affirmed. "The journalism business, in general, is a secular one," he said, adding that most of his staff reporters are not religious believers.



William Thorsell

But Thorsell saw a limited role for faith coverage in his newspaper. "We cover religion where it touches on public life," he said.

Hana Gartner challenged that contention by pointing out that the *Globe* got rid of its religion and ethics reporter, but Thorsell responded that his paper hasn't eliminated faith coverage but has "diversified it."

## Pulling punches

Thorsell admitted the media has a problem covering faith issues. "We have a great difficulty documenting values change. We need to develop our capacity [to do this]. I think we pull our punches when examining religions."

The *Globe*'s approach to faith coverage may stem in part from Thorsell's personal views. "I'm a rationalist. I'm not a religious person," he asserted. "I'm not inclined to focus on the faith side of values."

Brian Stiller criticized the media for often referring to Christians "in a pejorative way" with the label "fundamentalist" — a word he sees as meaning rigid or insensitive. Christians don't call themselves fundamentalists, argued Stiller. He explained how he recently got in touch with Canadian Press and asked for CP to use the word "evangelical" instead of "fundamentalist" when describing a certain type of Christian.

The media's biased and limited coverage of Islam and other religions other than Christianity was one of the ongoing issues discussed at the conference. Several Muslims spoke out about how they saw themselves and their faith as being misrepresented in the news.

To help correct faulty biases, Muslim filmmaker Zarqa Nawaz presented her film "A Death Threat," immediately after the town hall debate. The film was a 20-minute comedic examination of stereotypes held of Muslims.

# 'Dumbing down' in the classroom

**Pedagogeries**

Alyce Oosterhuis

Several years ago, a colleague and I team-taught a course in psychological tests and measurements. To enable students to experience the fact that many human characteristics are distributed in the population in a "bell curve" manner, we designed a lab exercise in which they had to take many measurements.

One student measured peers' hand spans and discovered that in the TKUC population, the majority (68 per cent) clustered around the average of all the measurements. A substantial number (14 per cent) deviated from the average as being below or above the majority. And a small percentage (two per cent) of the hand spans were extremely narrow or wide when compared to the midpoint of the distribution. Voila: the bell curve of hand spans had been reconstructed.

***Place them with their peers, enhance their self concept, and these "slow learners" become capable, contributing, integral members of the school community.***

In the past few years, the bell curve as applied to the distribution of intelligence in the North American population has often been attacked for being discriminatory, irrelevant, racist and destructive. I.Q. scores, as assessed by individualized intelligence tests, are decreasingly used for students' special needs referrals and/or services.

I.Q. tests do not tap students' multiple intelligences or gifts. They provide no creativity index and they are less predictive of students' classroom performances than past report cards. Yet no one would deny that ever since Alfred Binet was asked to construct a test that would enable the French educational authorities to determine which children need additional or special services to benefit from compulsory schooling, there are some children who are more educationally "intelligent" than others.

## Living with labels

For years, it was believed that children with assessed I.Q. scores from 85-130 could be placed in regular classes without special assistance, i.e. until the '70s. In that decade, the range of children served in classrooms shifted to 70-130. It had been found that the 14 per cent of children classified as "mildly retarded" (70-85 I.Q.) or "slow learners" were capable of much more than their labels suggested.

Remove the stigma of the label, place them with their peers, enhance their self concept, and these "slow learners" become capable, contributing, integral members of the school community.

The labels of "mild," "moderate" and/or "severe" retardation were now assigned to the two to three per cent of children with I.Q. scores below 70. These are the children who are recognized today as being in need of special services, aides, resource room, life skills training, etc. Only those children in the I.Q. ranges of 70-130 who were specifically diagnosed as learning disabled would be provided with a minimum of resource or learning assistance.

The two to three per cent of those with I.Q.s over 130 were considered to be the "gifted" who needed enrichment activities — only schools with available money could provide for the gifted's special needs.

## More 'smart' kids?

In my understanding, this range of 70-130 has encompassed the 94-96 per cent of the student populations in schools throughout the country for the last few decades, i.e. until I read the OACS Enrichment Manual for the gifted in Ontario Christian Schools. There I read that, with other criteria such as teacher identification, student achievement, and parental referral, the gifted are those who have an I.Q. score above 115 (as assessed by group intelligence tests).

If this is becoming the newly accepted definition of giftedness, then we have suddenly increased the percentage of potentially gifted students from two to three per cent of the population to 16-17 per cent of the whole! In other words, while the incidence of retardation has decreased significantly from 16-17 per cent to no more than two or three per cent of the whole, the incidence of giftedness has increased from two or three percent to 16-17 per cent — an opposite reversal.

Our school populations have become a lot "smarter"! Or have they really?

I would suggest that the shifting of the category of "normal" students from 85 to 130 I.Q. to 70 to 115 I.Q. may constitute a "dumbing down" in the classroom. I taught in an elementary school once where the principal maintained that whole class lessons should aim at the "low average" child. I disagreed because I felt that such instruction would destroy the motivation and interest of those who were average or above.

But that principal may have been a futurologist for the '90s, because what was "low average" in the '70s has now become "average." Maybe the time has come to throw out all I.Q. scores — their relevance to school programs and student needs are being seriously undermined by shifting diagnostic criteria anyway.

*Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis teaches education and pychology at The King's University College in Edmonton.*

Book Review

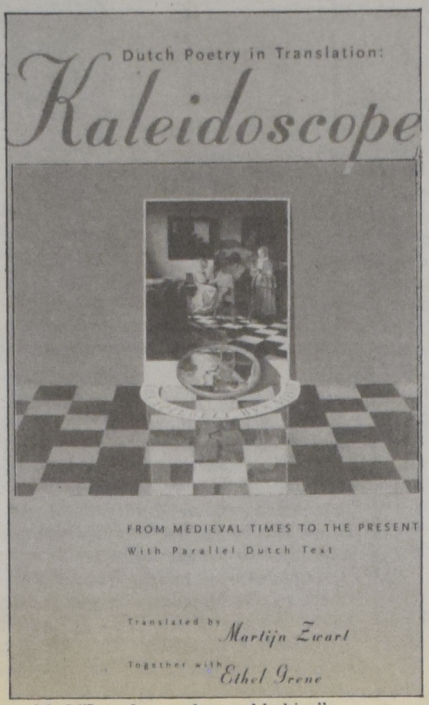
# *No need to scorn this poetic art with enmity*

**Bert Witvoet**

## Dutch Poetry in Translation: Kaleidoscope

***Translated by Martijn Zwart in collaboration with Ethel Grene.***

*Wilmette, Ill.: Fairfield Books, 1998. 256 pp., $22 (US), $30 (Cdn).*




This book of Dutch poems on the left pages and their English translations on the right has a special appeal to me. I can count at least six poems I had to memorize when I was a high school student in the Netherlands. There is Joost van den Vondel's poem, rich with alliteration and with wordplay about Johan van Oldenbarnevelt's cane. Van den Vondel was Holland's Shakespeare.

Geerten Gossaert's"The Mother" and Guido Gezelle's "Mother" also clearly ring in my memory.

My favorite in this book is the one entitled "Memories of Holland":

*Thinking of Holland*
*wide rivers I see*
*that slowly through infinite*
*lowlands flow,*
*tenuous poplars*
*strangely like plumes*
*stand at the horizon*
*row upon row.*

The translation and versification here, as elsewhere in the volume, is done sensitively and with fidelity. Having translated Dutch poetry myself, I know how difficult it is to retain the natural flow of the original when one is limited by rhyme, rhythm and a need to be faithful to the original text.

I therefore forgive the translators for not being able to capture the sense of slowness and breadth which the original gives in words like "rivieren" and "populieren." The English language just does not have that many three-syllable words with feminine endings (accent on the second-last syllable). "Rivers" and "poplars" are less lazy in their sound than "rivieren" and "populieren.".

Of course, my selection of favorites betrays my immigration status. Since the book contains poetry from the Middle Ages to the present, I am not familiar with many more recent Dutch poets, though I do notice that only four of the featured poets are still alive, and none were born after 1924.

I enjoyed the humorous poem "Peas" by Annie M.G. Schmidt. It reminds me a little of Mark Twain's discovery that his father was not as dumb as he thought when he was a teenager. This too is a poem about gained insight combined with false memory, as the author recounts a long afternoon shelling peas on the porch, an activity she hated. The poem ends with the girl being a 70-year-old woman and recalling how:

*at mother's house: there on the porch I sat,*
*out in the sunshine, shelling peas. Yes, that*
*was happiness. And I was seventeen.*

Another smile-inducing short verse is entitled "Lovely weather and babies":

*Lovely children in their crib,*
*Lovely weather at the gate.*
*The two have a common trait:*
*They seem to me — Truth cannot fib —*
*Loveliest, and we profit by it*
*Most, when they are dry and quiet.*

Ethel Grene tells me that Martijn Zwart did most of the translations, although she is fluent in Dutch herself. Zwart was born and educated in Holland, but not Grene. She decided it would be fun to learn a foreign language well. So Zwart became her teacher, and the end result is this collaboration, where Grene provided much of the fine tuning of the English, making it "more graceful in rhyme and rhythm."

Both Zwart and Grene belong to the Dutch Knickerbocker Society, which has a chapter near Wilmette, Ill., where Grene lives.

This is an excellent volume for those who would like to know more about Dutch poetry but cannot break the "klompen" code. I can see professors of Dutch using it in their classrooms.

And should you be disappointed, you can always apply the verse entitled "To My Lady":

*Madam, if this entire*
*Lot of rhymes you see*
*Burdens your library,*
*Commit them to the fire.*
*That they their life and heart*
*Should give back to the flame*
*Is justice all the same:*
*That's where they got their start.*

But for the rest of your life you will have to live with the guilt that you have seared someone's soul.

Book Review

# Technological progress sprang from Christian soil

**Shiao Chong**

## The Religion of Technology: The Divinity of Man and the Spirit of Invention.

***By David F. Noble.***

*New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997. 273 pp. Hardcover: ISBN 0-679-42564-0. $26(US) $36(Cdn).*

"...Modern technology and modern faith are neither complements nor opposites, nor do they represent succeeding stages of human development. They are merged, and always have been, the technological enterprise being, at the same time, an essentially religious endeavor" (4-5).

So writes David Noble, a historian from York University, in his latest book, *The Religion of Technology.* Noble argues that the drive for technological progress in Western culture is inherently religious; is, in fact, Christian.

Tracing the roots of modern technology back to the Middle Ages, Noble contends that modern technology grew out of the soil of medieval Christianity. In the early Middle Ages, after Augustine, technology became identified with the spiritual process of regaining humanity's lost image of God. The "divinity of man" was interpreted as consisting of wisdom and knowledge which humanity can use to rule the earth. Technological advancement, therefore, contributed directly to this religious project. Technology was increasingly identified as a means to salvation, defined as regaining humanity's image-likeness of God.

### Achieving transcendence

Noble's work is scholarly and provocative. He traces the history of technology from the Middle Ages to the present age of space exploration, artificial intelligence and genetic engineering. In each era he reveals the religious motivations behind the prime actors in the development of science and technology. For example, the majority of the U.S. space project pioneers were devout Christians. So were the leading geneticists.

Through his investigations, Noble suggests that the technological project of progress is inherently religious, even when pursued by atheists. This technological project, Noble argues, is one and the same with the religious project of achieving transcendence, of reclaiming the image of God. Noble names this the religion of technology.

To be clear, Noble does not suggest that fallen humanity has turned science into an idol, making technology a rival religion to Christianity. Rather, Noble suggests that Christianity itself is the problem. Or at least, the belief in transcendence, in reaching for other-worldly ends, should be discarded for more down-to-earth, practical motives.

Noble makes this clear in his conclusion: "The thousand-year convergence of technology and transcendence has thus outlived whatever historical usefulness it might once have had. Indeed, as our technological enterprise assumes ever more awesome proportions, it becomes all the more essential to decouple it from its religious foundation" (208).

### Oversights

I constantly find myself simultaneously agreeing and disagreeing with Noble as I read his book. He has many valid points to make. Yet, I often disagree with his conclusions and interpretations. Rather than discard technology's religious foundation, I believe we should reform it. Noble notices that Augustine's theology was not conducive to the rise of the religion of technology because of the doctrine of *sola gratia.*

It was only after Augustine, when a shift in soteriology occurred, that the religion of technology was born. But Noble fails to see the significance of this theological shift. In the Reformed tradition, this shift signaled a fundamental shift from God-centred theology to human-centred theology. If the problems of modern technology are largely caused by this religious framework, as Noble suggests, then recasting technology within a *sola gratia* framework may alleviate them.

Despite this and other disagreements I have with the author, I suggest anyone who is interested in thinking about technology to read this book, which effectively destroys the myths of technology's religious neutrality.

Comment

# How should the church relate to culture?

*Dear Adrian,*

I've been tossing our last exchange about in my mind, together with a book I recently read called *On the Road to the Wolf's Lair* by Theodore Hamerow. This is apparently a carefully researched book on German resistance to Hitler beginning in the 1930's and culminating in the July 20, 1944, attempt on his life. The book naturally devotes a good deal of attention to the position of the church, both Protestant and Catholic, during this period.

I want to say right off that for me to sit in judgment on the German church or German Christians would be totally inappropriate and arrogant. I simply don't know how I would have reacted if I had been a German in the 1930's, and I have no reason to think I would have been any more insightful or courageous than they were. My concern is to ask some questions of ourselves and to reflect on the position of the North American church in relation to our government and culture. And that circles back to your trip and the question of the relation between human activity and God's will.

**The story of the German church** in regard to Nazism is not edifying. The book suggests that with the apparently single exception of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the leaders were nationalistic and anti-Semitic Germans first, and somehow alongside that they were Christians. While they didn't support the extermination of the Jews, there was general agreement that something had to be done about "the Jewish question." There was even some sentiment that the "non-Aryan Christians" (Jewish converts to Christianity) ought to form a separate church.

Any "resistance" by the church, even by men like Niemoeller, was at the level of method, not principle. According to the book, Bonhoeffer alone, at least of the public figures, recognized the evil inherent in Nazism.

**What's the process by which an institutional** church gets so caught up in its culture? And so far away from the gospel, with such pious reasons for anti-Semitism? Is there something about "institutionalization" itself that is already on the wrong track?

Is it too harsh to say that much Kingdom work is carried on by individuals or by para-church organizations while the institutional church muddles along, often playing catch-up? To what degree has the Christian Reformed Church accommodated to the spirit around us? Do we really openly challenge the prevailing materialism, godlessness, and all the other isms that we could name?

It seems to me that at best we take on isolated symptoms of evil without fighting or even naming the root causes of the symptoms.

It takes no great insight to see that the North American churches are caught up in our culture. We've only begun to appreciate how much that fact has interfered with our mission in other parts of the world. Churches in Canada are perhaps less nationalistic than those in the United States, but the Canadian policy of multiculturalism could kill us with kindness, leaving the Christian church with no effective voice at all.

**I know, I know, God builds and preserves** the church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. But is that only comforting or is it also a cop-out view of "God's will"? The gates to hell came close to prevailing in Germany, though it may well be that there were the seven thousand who didn't bow the knee there too. I hope so.

I ended our last exchange with a tongue-in-cheek question about human activity and predestination. I'm sure your trip has given you many answers. Or more questions. But isn't that what getting older is all about?

*Regards,*
*Mary*

*Dear Mary,*

You've opened several cans of worms. Let me respond first to the one about the Christian church prior and during World War II. Recent public developments in France are busy demonstrating the shame of that nation with respect to Jews, and French churches of all ilk have much to account for.

A number of years ago books and reports published in Holland also pointed to a legacy of shame. The Dutch government resisted helping German Jews before the war. The Dutch population was slow to react to early Nazi efforts to identify, isolate and persecute Jews after the 1940 occupation. The "Anne Frank" reputation of the Dutch largely overlooks the fact that the majority of Dutch Jews were already doomed before hiding and resistance actually started.

I once made reference to this now well documented fact in a CC column some years ago, and did I get it in the teeth! (Of course there were splendid exceptions in both France and Holland. For instance, Dr. Klaas Schilder began writing pointed editorials that almost immediately illuminated the Nazis for who they were, editorials later bundled in his book *Bezet Bezit*.) And you are right, who of us can be sure that we would be as courageous as Bonhoeffer under dire circumstances?

**The second can of worms** is that of the church and nationalism. You're right, Canadian churches and American churches are not alike in this respect. During my career as an educational publisher I travelled extensively in the U.S., visited many schools and attended many educational conferences. On Sundays I would attend mainline churches. I experienced in the flesh that U.S. schools and churches have an intense patriotic side to them, one perhaps unique in the world.

I often felt coming at me a sort of "manifest destiny" conviction: the U.S. is God's special instrument for bringing freedom and success to the whole world. In its most blatant forms (in fundamentalist churches and schools) I would feel frightened by this kind of patriotism, and sense that the faith expressed and experienced there was a dangerous civic religion, one that could easily become fascist. Yes, Canada is a different in this respect. But yes, our "kind" multiculturalism "blands" away any opportunity to be prophetic, to stand on street corners and yell loudly about injustice and oppression, of the poor, the native, the ones not so swift and adept as most of us.

**And the third can of worms** is that of the Christian church anywhere not being much of an influence that would mirror Scripture and Jesus today. Let me take you back to that street corner in Shanghai once more. One reason for feeling that I couldn't be a missionary there is the knowledge that when the Christian church was perhaps at its most powerful, it also failed to stand in the ways of conquest and domination exercised by its members.

The history of 19th century Christian missions/imperialism remains a shameful one. And you're right, we two would have probably be one of "them" in "them" days. Probably because we would have been afraid of the institutions, including that of the church. Institutions, *all* institutions, seem to be born with the ability to instill fear in their followers.

Getting older is also about realizing the chances that were missed, the opportunities that were lost, and the words that should have been spoken but weren't. Yet when we honestly do that, the grace of God, a real sense of forgiveness, also enters. Out of that grace we must speak, lest our children and grandchildren repeat our errors.

*Love,*
*Adrian*

*Adrian Peetoom is a retired educational editor who lives in Waterloo, Ont., and Mary Vander Vennen is a retired therapist who lives in Toronto.*

# Two weeks that were

Bert Hielema

**MAY I SUGGEST THAT** we live in a crazy world? Oh, in Tweed it seems normal enough. Nothing much happens here: old people die and some of them suffer a bizarre death, such as an acquaintance of mine who was my buddy tenor when I helped the United Church choir out a couple of times.

He had set fire to some refuse in the garden, and when he poked with his shoe into the ashes, his pants were set ablaze and he burned to death; he was 84.

But the world is larger than our 50 acres of woods and rocks and swamp situated in the recently expanded Municipality of Tweed, Ont. A stream of magazines never fails to reach me and I have most of the newspapers of the world at my fingertips through the Net, so I can fully assess what makes this world so crazy.

**TAKE THE MOVIES** this summer. Two were released just before the holidays: *Deep Impact* and *Godzilla*. Sony spent $125 million to create a monster and is now shelling out $200 million (US) to promote this disaster flick in the hope that saturation media advertising will do what the film cannot: make it a hit.

Nowadays the *selling* of a movie is more important than its production. The cynical marketing managers assume that the masses can easily be deceived to believe that something that warrants so much publicity must be good.

**BOTH *DEEP IMPACT*** and *Godzilla* deal with nothing less than global destruction and the demise of the human species. Perfect stuff to feed on the fears of us gullible humans, entering a new millennium. Somehow I see God's hand in this: I sense that some aspect of the gospel is being preached here: these movies with their universal destruction theme sharpen the sense that the redemption we need these days is global and does not originate in Hollywood, even though their makers may make us believe this.

From the descriptions I have read — I have not seen them — they seem to say that our whole world is flawed and that it will take the annihilation of the entire cosmic order to make room for a new beginning. Sounds pretty religious to me.

**IT IS NOW OBVIOUS** that religion is in, but church is not. By religion I mean superstition, magic and the like. The Pope is preparing an encyclical against superstition, against the dangers of people believing in magic, in visitations by spirits, aliens, angels.

Bishops around the world are reporting paganism breaking out in the pews: crystals, pyramids, astrology and psychics are invading the church, even the evangelical wing, where such things as group chant, collective memory experiences connecting people to their ancestors and meditative drumming are becoming part of some services.

Last week in London, England, there was a mind/body/spirit fair at which you could awake the goddess within, heal your inner child, release your psychic energy, unblock your pathways or have an out-of-body experience with Don the gong master. You could have your eyeballs massaged and your aura photographed. Of such the fastest growing religion is comprised.

**MIND YOU, NOT ALL OF** that is bad. Fr. Peter Fleetwood, the British priest who acts as the secretary to the "superstition" commission set up by the Pope, says a line will be drawn. "Reincarnation is out of the question. But there is much we could learn from the methodology of the New Age. Their holistic approach does offer a warmer sense of belonging, of personal significance and respect for the planet. We're not so good at those things."

True, the church is pretty staid and one-dimensional: the spoken word: *sola scriptura*, especially in the Reformed tradition. In my opinion there is much more to the Christian religion than just the Scriptures.

**AN EXAMPLE.** I believe in reincarnation, that is in a resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. The common meaning of reincarnation is a rebirth in a different life-form, be it lion or louse. I don't buy that, of course, but a lot of people do. Yet, it is high time that the church spend some time in what our resurrected life would be like, lest superstition prevail. Christians should go out on a limb, imagine the eternal, visualize the hope we have.

Peter Clark, professor of the history and sociology of religion at King's College (London, not Edmonton) says, "We live in the most superstitious age ever." He notes glumly that a psychic will get 1,500 people in a lecture theatre, while a philosopher-theologian is lucky to draw 20. Why?

A good question. I think that the church should show a movie such as *Deep Impact* or *Godzilla* and discuss it. Too many sermons are sheer bunk, exactly what people want, so they can slumber on.

**INFORMATION ON** health is coming in all the time. Here is something new on your weight. Being overweight is bad for the heart, and for diabetics. The National Centre for Health Statistics is reducing its threshold for defining who is overweight from 26 to 25 BMI (Body Mass Index).

Curious whether you are overweight? Here is a simple calculation: Take your body height in metres. One inch is 2.54 cm. I am 1.77 metres. Square this amount, that is multiply by 1.77 = 3.1329. I weigh 145 pounds or 66 kilograms (2.2 pounds make a kg). Divide 3.1329 by 66 and out comes my Body Mass Index of 21, well below the threshold.

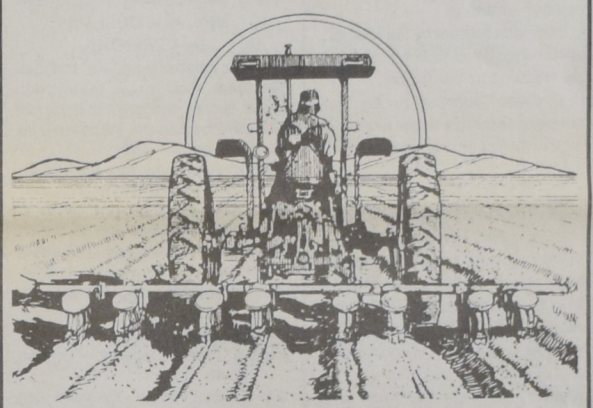
This new definition makes 55 per cent of the population overweight. If the index is more than 30, people are considered obese. Health risks, say the experts at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, can begin with a body mass as low as 25. So fast occasionally and cut out fat.

**THERE IS GOOD NEWS** on brains: aging mice that live in enriched environments with lots of playmates and toys like running wheels develop three times as many new brain cells as mice in boring environments. The implications, say scientists in California, is that the brains of elderly humans may benefit from varied activity.

So go to Bible study groups, prayer meetings, take a course, keep conversation alive, do something you have never done before. Be adventurous. Start writing a column. Keeps your brain young.

*Bert Hielema was a commissioner to the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church at its meeting in Windsor from June 7-12.*

THE FARM SPECIALIST AND MUCH MORE!



GREAT PRICES AND GREAT SERVICE ON FARM AND BUSINESS INSURANCE

MEESTER
INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.

VILLAGE SQUARE MALL HWY 20 P.O. BOX 299 SMITHVILLE, ONT. L0R 2A0
PHONE 957-2333 FAX 957-2599 FREE 1-800-465-8256

Voortman

Over 40 Varieties of Fine Cookies

# Classifieds

## Classified Rates

**(Revised February 1, 1995)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Births | $25.00 |
| Marriages & Engagements | $40.00 |
| Anniversaries | $45.00 |
| 2-column anniversaries | $90.00 |
| Obituaries | $45.00 |
| Notes of thanks | $35.00 |
| Birthdays | $40.00 |

All other one-column classified advertisements: $15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $15.00. Letter under file number $35.00 extra. Photos: $25.00 additional charge.

**Note:** All rates shown above are GST inclusive

**ATTENTION!**

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.,

b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax *are not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

d) *Christian Courier* will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. *Christian Courier* reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of $15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).

**NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS**

We offer a one-year subscription for only $25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the *Christian Courier* and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose $25.00 and the couple's correct address.

**Christian Courier**
**4-261 Martindale Rd.**
**St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**
**Phone: (905) 682-8311**
**Fax: (905) 682-8313**

E-mail: ccadverts@aol.com

## Church News

**Christian Reformed Church**

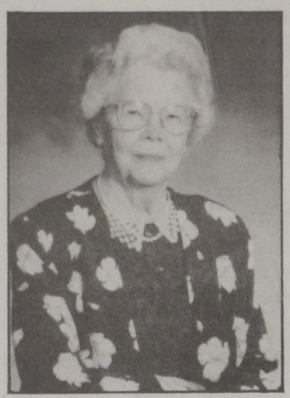
**Call declined:**

— Nobleford, Alta., **Rev. Richard J. de Lange** of St. Catharines, Ont.

**Classis meeting:**

— **Classis Chatham** will meet, D.V., on **Sept. 15, 1998**, in the Fellowship CRC, **St. Thomas**, Ont. Send all materials to the stated clerk by Monday, Aug. 3, 1998.

## Birthdays



*Congratulations to Mrs. Alie Oegema on her 90th birthday!*

**OEGEMA:**

On Sunday, June 5, 1998, the Lord willing, our mother

**MRS. ALIE OEGEMA**
**(nee DRENTH)**

hopes to celebrate her 90th birthday. We thank God for all these years given to her and pray that He will bless Mom and continue to keep her in His care.

Joyce & Ronald De Jong — St. Thomas, Ont.
Heiko & Helen Oegema — Talbotville, Ont.
Ann & Chris Vanderveen — Brantford, Ont.
Tom & Maria Oegema — Talbotville, Ont.
Henry Oegema — Abbotsford, B.C.
Hans & Dorothy Oegema — London, Ont.
Ada & John Diemer — Belleville, Ont.

18 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Mom's address is: Shalom Manor, 12 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5

## Anniversaries

1953 July 11 1998

We, their children and grandchildren, give thanks to God for the lives and love of our parents and grandparents

**JOHANNES (HANS) and CORNELIA (CORRIE) MEIBOOM**

over the past 45 years.

John Meiboom & Beth Little
Lucas, Justin, Nicholas
Boreas & Linda Meiboom
Daniel, Rebekka
Frank & Beverly Meiboom
Krista, Katie, Andrew, Nicole
Carol & Fred Vellekoop
Eric, Jackie, Adam

Greetings can be sent to: 31 First Avenue, Trenton, ON K8V 4C2 or call (613) 392-8821.

## Anniversaries

Winterswijk Woodstock
the Neth. Ont.
1948 July 20 1998

It is with great joy that we announce the golden anniversary of our parents

**GERRIT and BERENDINA GREVERS**
**(TEN PAS)**

"We will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with our mouths we will make your faithfulness known through all generations. Indeed our shield belongs to the Lord, our king to the holy one of Israel" (Ps.89:1 and 18).

Ria & Ben Krabbe — Listowel, Ont.
Mark, Brian
Bernice & Alex Huinink — Embro, Ont.
Kevin, Julie & Randall, Danielle, Rachel, Daryl, Valerie
Ben & Brenda Grevers — Falkland, Ont.
Tina, Gerry & Tracy, Jackie & John
Jane & Al Been — Belmont, Ont.
Derrick, Adrian
Dorothy & Gerry Vaandering — London, Ont.
Christopher, Anthony
Gerald & Rita Grevers — Monkton, Ont.
Heidi, Kelly
Judy & John Wubs — Hamilton, Ont.
Dina, Evie

Come celebrate with us at an open house, D.V., on July 18, 1998, from 3-5 p.m., at the John Knox Chr. School, Juliana Drive, Woodstock, Ont.

Your presence is your gift.

Home address: 1138 Bennett Terrace, Woodstock, ON N4S 8E8

*Congratulations to Gerrit and Berendina Grevers on their 50th wedding anniversary!*

## Anniversaries

1953 July 2 1998
Voorburg Willowdale
the Neth. Ont.

We thank God for the 45th anniversary of our parents and grandparents

**JAN and MARIE ROELEVELD**
**(nee PAUL)**

Congratulations Mom and Dad!

Mary-jane and Harry Oussoren — Guelph, Ont.
John, Andrew, Paul
Simon & Betty Roeleveld — Richmond Hill, Ont.
Derek, Jenny
Frances & Fred Layton — Ajax, Ont.
Tom, Melissa
Jack & Laura Roeleveld — Richmond Hill, Ont.
James, Joel, Blair, Carl
Hilda Roeleveld & Derrick Edwards — Markham, Ont.
Terevia, Cassius
Denise Roeleveld & Allan Williams — Toronto, Ont.
Pauline Roeleveld — Willowdale, Ont.
Yvonne & Jim MacMillan — Toronto, Ont.
Ingrid Roeleveld — Willowdale, Ont.
Anita Roeleveld & Lorenzo Lalomia — Richmond Hill, Ont.
Carlina

## Anniversaries

1953 June 17 1998
Hamilton, Ont. Tweed, Ont.

**BERT and DINY HIELEMA**
**(nee HILBERS)**

celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary. We, your children and grandchildren, are thankful for God's faithfulness through you as you continue to search to be faithful to Him. It's our prayer that you will enjoy each other for many more years.

Syd & Evelyn Hielema — Sioux Center, Iowa
Joya, Justin, Adrian
Pauline & Rick Budding — New Hamburg, Ont.
Erica, Andrea, Alexander
Gobind Kaur & Siri Atma Singh Khalsa — Los Angeles, Calif.
Sirisumpuran
Denise & John Deen — Raleigh, N.C.
Tobin, Bronwyn, Aiden
Edgar Hielema — Toronto

Address: R.R. 3, Tweed, ON K0K 3J0

## Personal

**ONE TO ANOTHER**
Christian companion magazine.
Hundreds of readers Canada-wide.
Single issue $5.
Write to:
**#12 923 2nd Ave. S.**
**Lethbridge, AB T1J 0C7**

## Teachers

**ST. CATHARINES, Ont.: Calvin Memorial Chr. School** invites applications for a **full-time position**, most likely in **Grade 5**, for the 1998-99 school year. We are looking for a candidate who demonstrates a deep love for the Lord, has a Biblical vision for curriculum and pedagogy, and is creative and dynamic in teaching and interacting with students. Please call for more information or send a resume, including a statement explaining your understanding of Christian education, to:

**Mrs. Karen Gerritsma, Principal**
**Calvin Memorial Chr. School**
**300 Scott St.**
**St. Catharines, ON L2N 1J3**
**(905) 937-6302**

Deadline for applications is July 6,1998.

# Classifieds

## Anniversaries

1958 July 4 1998
Owen Sound Kitchener
"For the Lord is good and His love endures forever, His faithfulness endures for all generations" (Ps.100:5).
With gratitude to God and love in our hearts we are pleased to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

**HANS and STIEN NUSSELDER**
**(nee DE HAAN)**

We thank them for their love and support and we pray for God's continued blessings in their life together.
Helen & Mike Plaisier — Dorchester, Ont.
Christina, Peter, Julie
Phil & Annette Nusselder — Kitchener, Ont.
Matthew, Connor
Home address: 1257 Ottawa St. S., Kitchener, ON N2E 1L9

*Congratulations to Hans and Stien Nusselder on their 40th wedding anniversary!*

## Anniversaries

***Congratulations to Henk and Alice Van Dalen on their 60th anniversary!***

1938 June 25 1998
With grateful hearts we thank the Lord for the blessings he has given our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

**HENK VAN DALEN**
**and**
**ALICE POL VAN DALEN**

We rejoice with them on the celebration of their 60th wedding anniversary.
Hank & Jacqueline Van Dalen — Unionville
Laurie, Rick
Marjorie & Ken Bylsma — Kitchener
Angela
Ralph & Dianne Van Dalen — Waterloo
Denise & Alan (Tristan, Mykahla), Candace
Alice Van Dalen — Kitchener
To celebrate this event, we invite friends and family to an open house on June 27, 1998, from 2-4 p.m., at the Waterloo Chr. Ref. Church, 209 Bearinger Rd., Waterloo, Ont.
Home address: 104 Biehn Dr., Kitchener, ON N2G 3W5

## Obituaries

Anjum, Fr. Brampton
the Neth. Ont.
March 21, 1909 - June 4, 1998
"But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear Him" (Ps. 103:17a).
On June 4, 1998, our heavenly Father, in His wisdom, called His child

**LIEUWKJE BANDSTRA**
**(DEKEMA)**

Beloved wife of the late Oege Bandstra.
Dear mother of:
John & Ann Bandstra
Jenny & Bill Dykstra
Jim & Betty Bandstra
Herman & Hinke Bandstra
Mike & Jenny Bandstra
Annie & Claude Biersteker
Bob & Pat Bandstra
Also sadly missed by 30 grandchildren and 53 great-grandchildren.
Predeceased by her granddaughter Francine Bandstra.
The funeral service was held at Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, Bowmanville, Ont., Rev. Mike Miedema officiating.
If so desired donations could be made to Faith Manor.
Correspondence address:
John Bandstra, 3695 Conc. Rd. 3, R.R. 8, Newcastle, ON L1B 1L9

## For Rent

**St. Catharines, Ont.: Bright basement room**. Suitable for student. Shared entrance, separate bath, fridge, stove, cable TV, laundry facilities. Piano and organ available for practice. $325.00 monthly. Available Sept. 1998.
**Call (905) 937-3367**

**Cottage for rent.** Bancroft, Ont., area, 3 bedrooms, water frontage. $400/wk. Contact John VanHuizen at **(613) 392-8488.**

## Miscellaneous

Send your questions to

**Peter and Marja**

Confidentiality is assured.

## Job Opportunities

### Westminster Theological Seminary

**Box 27009, Philadelphia, PA 19118**

announces openings in the following departments:

**Department of Practical Theology with a specialty in missions.**

This is a full-time, tenure track position that begins **July 1, 1999.** Responsibilities include teaching M.Div., M.A.R., and graduate-level (D.Min.) courses (14-16 semester hours per academic year) and various committee assignments. Applicants should have an earned doctoral degree and show strong evidence of scholarly writing and quality teaching. Commitment to biblical inerrancy, Reformed theology and Presbyterian church government, as shown by subscription to the Westminster Standards and significant involvement in the life of a Presbyterian or Reformed church, is required. All qualified applicants are urged to apply. Salary will be commensurate with rank. Candidates are urged to send curriculum vitae with name and address of two references immediately.

**Department of Old Testament**

This is a full-time, tenure track position that begins **July 1, 1999.** Responsibilities include teaching M.Div., M.A.R., Th.M., and Ph.D. courses and various committee assignments. Applicants must hold the Ph.D./Th.D. or be in the final stages of doctoral work and show strong evidence of scholarly writing and quality teaching. Commitment to biblical inerrancy, Reformed theology and Presbyterian church government, as show by subscription to the Westminster Standards and significant involvement in the life of a Presbyterian or Reformed church, is required. All qualified applicants are urged to apply. Salary will be commensurate with rank. Candidates are urged to send curriculum vitae with name and address of two references immediately.

**Department of Systematic Theology**

This is a full-time, tenure track position that begins **July 1, 1999.** Responsibilities include teaching M.Div., M.A.R., and graduate level (Th.M., Ph.D.) courses (14-16 semester hours per academic year) and various committee assignments. Applicants must hold the Ph.D./Th.D. or be in the final stages of doctoral work and show strong evidence of scholarly writing and quality teaching. Commitment to biblical inerrancy, Reformed theology and Presbyterian church government, as shown by subscription to the Westminster Standards and significant involvement in the life of a Presbyterian or Reformed Church, is required. All qualified applicants are urged to apply. Salary will be commensurate with rank. Candidates are urged to send curriculum vitae with name and address of two references immediately.

**Please contact Dr. William Barker, vice-president for academic affairs, at the above address.**

### Route Sales Trainee

We require a responsible, self-motivated, person to train for the wholesale route sales of our excellent line of floral products. Candidates with some knowledge of horticulture preferred. Excellent driving record essential.

**If you meet these criteria please contact Brian van Staalduinen at 1-800-263-6815 to arrange an interview.**

# Classifieds

## Job Opportunities

**Full-time teaching position**, junior-intermediate level. Strengths in the following are an asset: Phys.Ed., French, computers. Apply to:
**J. Atkinson, Principal, Muskoka Chr. School,**
**Box 150, Utterson, ON P0B 1M0.**
**Phone: (705) 385-2847 or Fax: (705) 385-1756.**

MUSKOKA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

### *Seeking a Campus Pastor*

**McMaster Campus Ministry**, a co-operative ministry of **Classis Hamilton** and **Christian Reformed Home Missions**, is seeking a campus pastor due to the retirement of **Rev. Aren Geisterfer**. We are looking for an ordained or non-ordained person with gifts including leadership development, discipling and pastoral counselling, and with academic acumen and a calling for this exciting ministry opportunity in **Hamilton, Ont**. Interested applicants can contact **Rev. Ray Vander Kooij at pastoray@nornet.on.ca** or call **(519) 428-3671.** A position description is available upon request.

### DENTAL HYGIENIST

**Experienced full-time hygienist needed** to care for patients while our current hygienist is on maternity leave. This is a six-month employment opportunity in a Christian environment with a progressive dental office in **Huntsville, Ont.**, beginning in August 1998.

**Fax resume to (705) 789-0244 or**
**call Dr. Virtue at (705) 789-1747.**

## Events

### Ligonier Ministries of Canada

Presents the 1998 Toronto Conference
with
**Dr. Stephen Beck, Dr. Mariano DiGangi,**
**Dr. Jonathan Gerstner, Dr. Michael Haykin,**
**Dr. Neal Hegeman, Dr. Joel Nederhood**

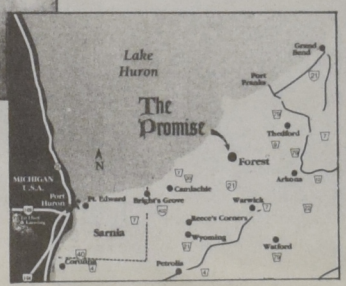
**Special Workshop:**
**August 7(day), 1998**
**"Evangelicals & Catholics Together"**

**August 7 (evening) & 8 (day), 1998**
**Conference: "In The Grace of Christ: The Doctrines of Grace"**
**Bramalea Baptist Church**
**9050 Dixie Road, Bramalea (Corner of Dixie Road and Hwy.#7)**

**Please call 1.800.563.3529**
**for registration & information**

## Events

The Promise




**A Musical Pageant**
on
**The Life of Christ**

**Produced and directed by**
**Syd Fletcher**

**Presented at:**
**The Forest Amphitheatre**
**Forest, Ont.**
**July 3, 4, 5 and**
**July 10, 11, 12, 1998**
*Bring lawnchair & blanket!*
Gate opens at 7:30 p.m.
Performance starts at 8:30 p.m.

The Forest Amphitheatre is located at the Esli Dodge Conservation Area, just off Hwy. 21, on the **South Side** of Forest, Ont.

For information call:
**1-800-265-0316**
Group packages & information:
**1-519-786-2319**
Internet access:
**www.forestaec.com**
E-mail: **promise@xcelco.on.ca**
**The Promise**
**Box 522, Forest, ON N0N 1J0**

## Miscellaneous

### Holland Christian Homes Inc.

**Brampton, Ont.**
is offering
**5.25% for 5 year promissory notes**
**5.00% for 4 year promissory notes**
**4.75% for 3 year promissory notes**
**4.00% for 2 year promissory notes**
**4.00% for 1 year promissory notes**

The funds raised will be used to finance the new apartment project being developed on the land acquired in 1997.

Please contact Administration at:
**Phone: (905) 459-3333 or Fax: (905) 459-8667**

## Teachers

**STRATFORD, Ont.: Stratford District Chr. School** invites applications for a definite opening for a **full-time Grade 7/8 teacher** in September 1998. Strength in computers would be an asset. Please send your resume for this position by **July 10, 1998**, to:
**Mr. Edward Petrusma, Principal**
**Stratford District Chr. School**
**R.R. #1, 130 Huron Rd.**
**Sebringville, ON N0K 1X0**
**Phone: (519) 393-5675**
**Fax: (519) 393-6306**

**WALLACEBURG, Ont.: Wallaceburg Chr. School**, a 100-student, K-8 school, is seeking applications for a Grade 7 and 8 teacher for the 1998/1999 school year.
Please call **(519) 683-6068** for more details or send applications to:
**Wayne Hooyer**
**R.R. #6**
**Dresden, ON N0P 1M0**

### Environmental Facts

***When a tree is harvested, every part serves a useful purpose.***

(NC)—Of each tree harvested, 95% goes into useful products, such as lumber, plywood, chips, and sawdust, or into fuel to co-generate power for the mill. Even the bark is used for fuel or landscaping products. The remaining 5% of the tree - the branches - are left behind in the forest to naturally biodegrade, enriching the soil.

As our population increases, so does the demand for building materials. By building with wood, we choose a quality material that is renewable AND biodegradable.

### Attention:

If you are considering sending us an ad via fax, please be sure to:
* send printed or typed copy
* include billing address
* include contact person with phonenumber.
**Thank you.**

# Classifieds

## Events

## Calendar of Events

**Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.**

**June 27-28** Fiftieth anniversary celebration of the Community CRC (formerly First CRC), **Kitchener,** Ont. For info. call the church office at (519) 743-9482. (#)

**July 1** "Frisian Picnic," 11 a.m., Pinehurst Conservation Park, **Paris**, Ont. (on Hwy. 24A, 4 miles north of Paris). (#)

**July 2-4** 1998 National Pro-Life Conference at Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Theme: "The Canadian Quilt: a Life Pattern." Speakers include David Mainse and Patricia Bainbridge. Registration fees: $40/day, $90/three days. Info.: (905) 525-9238 or (905) 528-3065.

**July 3,4,5,10.11.12** "The Promise," a musical pageant on the life of Christ. Do not miss this event! At the Forest Amphitheatre, **Forest**, Ont. Bring lawnchair and blanket! Gate opens at 7:30 p.m., performance at 8:30 p.m. Info.: 1-800-265-0316. (#)

**July 8** "Hollandse Dag," 10 a.m., Caradoc Community Centre, **Mount Brydges**, Ont. Speaker: Rev. H. Bergsma.

**July 12** Dutch worship service led by Rev. Peter Van Egmond, 3 p.m., CRC, 70 Hwey. 53 E., **Ancaster**, Ont.

**July 13-18** Summerfest: A Learning Vacation for the Whole Family. Theme: "Crossing Cultures Through Words and Images." At the campus of Calvin College, **Grand Rapids**, Mich. For info. call (616) 957-6801 or E-mail: rvbroek@calvin.edu (#)

**July 13-31** ICS/Wycliffe-sponsored Summer School, 229 College St., **Toronto**, Ont. For more info. contact John Franklin at (416) 979-2331. Toll free 1-888-326-5347. E-mail: franklin@ultratech.net

**Aug. 7-10** ICS Ontario Summer Conference, featuring Dr. Bob Goudzwaard on the theme: "Proclaim Jubilee: A New Beginning." At Maple Grove Christian Retreat Centre, **Thamesford**, Ont. Info.: (416) 979-2331 or e-mail: ics@icscanada.edu

**to Sept. 11** A major 15-yr. retrospective art exhibition by George Langbroek. At the Rodman Hall Arts Centre, 109 St. Paul Cr., **St. Catharines**, Ont. Info.: (905) 684-2925.

**Sept. 24-26** CLAC/WRF-sponsored conference exploring christian perspectives on shaping the workplace. At the Holiday Inn, **Burlington**, Ont. Plenary speakers: Don Posterski, Harry Antonides, Lee Hardy, Elwin Beukes and Marc Bacon. Free public presentation with Dr. John Bolt on Frid., Sept. 25, on: "Greed, Goodness, and God - Hope for Canada's Bottom Line." Info.: (905) 670-7386 or vist web page: www.interlog.com/~wrf/cwuf.htm

**Sept. 26** Toronto District Chr. High School's 35th Anniversary Celebration Dinner! All friends of TDCH are invited to attend this event at the school, **Woodbridge**, Ont. Tickets $35, order through the school office beginning May 1, 1998. Tel. (905) 851-1772.

**Oct.11** First CRC, **Owen Sound**, Ont. celebrates its 50th anniversary! Variety program on Friday. Homecoming tea/dinner on Saturday. Special service on Sunday. Info.: Linda DeBoer (519) 371-8192. (#)

**Nov. 6** Christian Festival Concert by the choirs and brass of the O.C.M.A., Leendert Kooij, director. Guest artists: Andre Knevel, Sander van Marion, Lisette Emmink, the Kooij sisters, and the Concert Band "Euphonia." At 8 p.m., Roy Thomson Hall, **Toronto**, Ont. Info./tickets: (416) 636-9779. (#)

## Miscellaneous


**ISRAEL**

*Join this unique Fall tour to the Land of the Bible*

**11 exciting days**
**October 19 - October 29, 1998**

Cost: $2,465 p.p. ex. Toronto, dbl. Occ.
Plus departure tax

**VISIT**
Jerusalem - Bethlehem - Nazareth - Masada
and many other places

**FREE STOP-OVER IN AMSTERDAM**

Personally escorted by:
**Rev. John G. Klomps**
For complete information and reservation please call or write:
**Rev. John G. Klomps**
**Meadowvale Travel Inc.**
**6750 Mississauga Rd., Mississauga, ON L5N 2L3**
**Tel.: (905) 826-4141 or toll free 1-800-387-2421**
**Fax: (905) 542-0154; Home (905) 824-5074**

*Come* **BANK** *with us.*

**Discover the difference**

**DUCA CREDIT UNION**

Head Office and Main Branch
5290 Yonge Street, Willowdale, Ontario M2N 5P9
Phone: 416-223-8502 Fax: 416-223-2575
E-mail: duca.info@duca.com Internet: www.duca.com

Willowdale ~ Toronto ~ Rexdale ~ Etobicoke
Scarborough ~ Brampton ~ Orangeville
Richmond Hill ~ Newmarket ~ Oshawa ~ Bowmanville

**SALEM**
*Christian Mental Health Association*

Salem is committed to Christian love, understanding, patience and hope in the care of the mentally and emotionally distressed.

**Services include:**
- consultation available to churches on sensitive issues (abuse) etc.
- individual, couple and family counselling
- workshop presentations

*Qualified Christian Professional Counsellors*
1 Young St. S-512, Hamilton, ON L8N 1T8 Ph:(905)528-0353

**EH JJ SHOW**
Christian TV Entertainment

Times: Vision TV
Cable Network
Thursday mornings
6:30 a.m. ET & PT
7:30 a.m. MT & AT

Also CJIL-TV
(The Miracle Channel)
Lethbridge, Alberta
9:30 a.m. and a repeat in evening
Sponsored by Voortman Cookies

Flights
Cruises & Packages
Head Office
**DCA Travel** SERVICE INC.
Canada wide
**1-800-667-2525**
TORONTO 416-224-5211
BRADFORD 905-775-6763
E-mail: dca _ travel@compuserve.com
*Emergency Service Available*
*Business & Vacation Travel Worldwide!*
Martinair - KLM - vacation

**What if** one day next week **you couldn't Speak?**

Or maybe you couldn't walk. Or your vision was blurred. That's what it's like to live with multiple sclerosis. But with your help, we can connect with a cure.

**1-800-268-7582**
**Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada**

# Social justice enters new day within CRC

**Keith Knight**

SARNIA, Ont. — The Christian Reformed Church has moved to correct a serious gap in its global outreach. Church agency representatives met recently to launch a new, joint initiative in the area of social justice. It is called the co-ordinating council for Church in Society. Its task will be to motivate local congregations and individuals into action.

Social action is not foreign to CRCs in Canada where they have benefitted by initiatives carried out by Citizens for Public Justice and, more formally, through Committee for Contact with the Government (CCG), a committee of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. CCG has tackled numerous tough issues over the years and has presented a number of position papers on topics including lotteries, Sunday shopping, child care, pornography, criminal justice and abortion.

COURTESY REINDER KLEIN

*Representatives from several agencies met in Sarnia, Ont., at the end of May to develop strategies for social justice.*

## Strategic plan

A number of work groups will be created across Canada and the United States around specific themes. Some of these groups will be regionally based and others will be national or binational gatherings.

The Christian Reformed Church made a significant step three years ago when it created the Office of Social Justice and World Hunger. Then in the fall of 1997, a number of meetings were held to put together the denominational strategic plan. In addition to setting goals in the areas of worship, nurture, pastoral care and outreach, they also addressed an area called "kingdom extension" which was later renamed "church in society."

Representatives from several agencies met in Sarnia, Ont., at the end of May to develop strategies for social justice. Among those present were representatives from World Missions, CRWRC, CRC Publications, Race Relations, Reformed Ecumenical Council, Committee for Contact with the Government and the Social Justice office. Two Calvin College students were also on hand to provide youthful input.

The co-ordinating council decided that the group be expanded to include others with special interests in social justice, and that it meet twice a year. At the September meeting, a number of issues will be identified and work groups formed.

The council pointed out the strong need to educate the Christian Reformed constituency about justice issues. That educating process would take place formally within the classroom as well as through church school curriculum materials, magazine articles and leadership training. The council will also organize a denominationally-sponsored biennial conference focusing on peace and justice issues. The first one is scheduled to take place in 2000.

The council expressed concern about staffing to move the various justice initiatives forward. The equivalent of one full-time staff person exists on the American side. The future of staffing in Canada should be clarified by this fall. Reinder Klein is engaged in research for CCG but that group will be folded into the new Canadian structure by this fall and the future of that paid staff position is still unclear.

## Canadian co-ordinator

Peter Vandermeulen, the denomination's social justice director, said he would love to see a Canadian co-ordinator in place who would see to it that elements of the strategic plan in the area of social justice would be carried out. He said that decision would be left up to the newly formed Canadian Ministries Board.

Some Christian Reformed churches are already involved in social justice activity. More than 25 of them have created social justice committees. A denominational goal as reflected in the strategic plan is that, by 2002, every congregation will have such a committee. It is also hoped that fully one-half of the churches will have developed programs that respond to local incidents of injustice by that year.

# *Trinity Western to reappear in B.C. court*

**Jacky Naayer**

LANGLEY, B.C. — The battle that began in 1985 for Trinity Western University (TWU) is far from over. TWU reappeared in the BC Court of Appeal from June 15 to 17 to once again take on the British Columbia College of Teachers (BCCT).

In May of 1997 TWU challenged the BCCT's refusal to grant them the final year for education majors in the education degree program. The BCCT withheld approval even though the program met all the academic standards and was recommended for approval by the BCCT's own review committee.

Their denial was based on the University's beliefs about homosexual behavior. TWU has a set of community standards that each student, staff and faculty member sign. A section in the community standards states that the TWU community is required to refrain from extra-marital sex, including homosexual behavior.

The BCCT believes that those who graduate from TWU might be intolerant of gay students because of this document.

Guy Saffold, Executive Vice-President at TWU, said the court case "is a very complicated case. It bears on administrative issues, on public issues; so there's an enormous amount of case law that they (the legal team) have to co-ordinate.

Saffold states that TWU's case is based on four main points: that the BCCT was outside its jurisdiction, that it presented no evidence of any discrimination against anyone, that they discriminated against TWU, and that the BCCT violated TWU's rights under the charter of rights and freedoms.

The implications for Christians are very serious according to Saffold, "If a government agency can decide they don't like someone's beliefs and then decide because they don't like them not to give them a license, what happens if the membership of the agency changes? Who knows what will be ruled out next time? It's not a good principle to use."

## Prayer as weapon

The TWU community believes that prayer is key in this situation. "We believe that Trinity Western is under the care of a sovereign God and we don't want to take that lightly," Saffold says. "When you go to court then you have a legal dispute that is decided by legal means, but we really think that there are larger matters that we are concerned for."

These concerns, according to Saffold, are the strength of the church in Canada and the freedom of Christian people to maintain their standards and not be pushed out of public life because of their beliefs. "These are legal matters, they're constitutional matters, they're also spiritual matters and that's why we want to pray."

June 14 was the day of prayer for the court case. The final decision is expected in the fall.

## News Digest

### Dangerous Bible typos

LONDON, U.K. — In the days before spell-checkers, some funny typesetting bloopers caused serious problems when they appeared in early editions of the Bible. Here are examples taken from *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*:

A Bible edition from Charles I's reign has Psalm 14:1 say: "The fool hath said in his heart there is a God." As a result, the printers were fined the equivalent of $3,000, and all copies were suppressed.

A 1631 version of the Scriptures was called "The Wicked Bible" because the word "not" was omitted from the seventh commandment (Exodus 20:14), making it read: "Thou shalt commit adultery." The fine of $300 helped to ruin the printer, Barker and Lucas.

Perhaps these typos caused an edition from 1702 to make David complain in Psalm 119:161: "printers [princes] have persecuted me without a cause."

### *Parachuting priest*

THE NORTH POLE (EP) — A Russian priest parachuted to the North Pole April 20, where he planted a wooden cross on an ice floe and said a prayer.

Viktor Smetanikov, senior priest of a Russian Orthodox cathedral in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk, made the jump to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Russia's conquest of Siberia.

The jump, organized by Russia's Olympic Committee, made Smetanikov the first clergyman to visit the North Pole.

### Lunch-box bandit jailed

EDMONTON (CP) — A judge has packed a lunch-box bandit off to prison for 14 years, denouncing his string of robberies as calculated and cowardly. Police dubbed Philip Glen Noel 'the lunch-box bandit' after he used a black plastic lunch pail in his early jobs. He told victims that it contained explosives.

Noel soon dumped the trademark in favor of more elaborate disguises. He pleaded guilty in January to holding up four downtown Edmonton banks in 1997.